

A N
E P I S T L E
T O T H E *Duple*
Inhabitants of *Gillingham*,

In the County of *Dorset* :

W H E R E I N I S

A LOOKING-GLASS for the Faithful,

T O S H E W T H E M

Their NAMES were written in the L A M B's
Book of Life, before the Foundation of the
World :

W I T H A V A R I E T Y O F

SIMILES typical of *JESU*'s Blood ;

Never before Published.

By JOHN CAVE, *Glover*, in BRECON.

Wherein are Instructions for the Ignorant ; Milk for
Babes ; stronger Meat for young Men and Fathers ;
and a Death Warrant for the formal Professor, and
careless Sinner. Begun Nov. 19th, 1752, in *Gil-*
ingham, my native Town, owing to a hot Persecu-
tion for receiving Ministers to my House, and finish-
ed lately in *Brecon*. And has been much approved
of by many eminent Divines, who for several Years
have frequented my House there.

B R E C O N,

Printed for the AUTHOR, by E. EVANS. 1781.

[Price Two SHILLINGS and SIX-PENCE.]

RECOMMENDATION.

COLLEGE, Oct. 25th, 1779.

The Rev. Mr. BODDILY, having first examined the Epistle to Gillingham, subscribed; and sent a Recommendation of it to Bath: Afterwards it gained the following Approbation of other Ministers.

WE whose Names are under written, have perused the Epistle to Gillingham, do believe it to be the true Spirit of the Gospel, and the Genuine Experience of a true Believer; and as such recommend it, hoping and wishing it may be of general Advantage to the Interest of Religion, and the Souls of Men in particular.

BRISTOL, }
Oct. 30th, 1779. }

CALEB EVANS, Senior.

BATH, Nov. 5th.

{ EDM. CHISHULL,
JOSEPH BARLOW.

FROME, Nov. 12th.

{ T. HILLIER,
JAMES RICHARDSON.

BECKINGTON, }
Dec. 3d. }

THOMAS HEWET.

Have not perused all the Book, but what I have heard and seen, believe it to be orthodox and sound.

NORTH BRADLY }
Dec. 9th. }

GEO. BATCHELOR.

TROWBRIDGE, }
Dec. 16th. }

JOHN CLERK.

MILKSHAM, }
Jan. 5th, 1780. }

T. HONYWILL.

SALISBURY, Jan. 31st.

JOHN ADAMS.

BRECON, Mar. 5th.

W. WILLIAMS.

CARMARTHEN, Apr. 13th.

P. WILLIAMS, Clerk.

N. B. The Number of Subscribers to this EPISTLE consisteth of about *Two Thousand*: but it being so well attested by the above DIVINES; it is needless to insert their Names for a Recommendation.



T O t h e R E A D E R.

*W*Hereas, by the Providence of God, this Epistle hath made its Way into the World; my Readers might be anxious to know the efficient Cause of its being written: therefore I would wish to inform them, that I was born in Gillingham, in Dorsetshire, brought up a Churchman, and by Occupation a White Taxer and Glover: after which I commenced an Officer of Excise, and was ordered to Talgarth, in Breconshire; and having Trevecka under Survey, had frequent Opportunities of attending the Ministry of Mr. Howell Harries, who lived there; under whose efficacious Doctrine I was convinced of Sin; after which the Lord was graciously pleased to reveal himself unto me. Some Years after, I was favoured with an amiable Wife; and having now left the Excise, we judg'd it proper to go to Gillingham to settle: and being a Native of that Town, was received with much Affection, and lived exceeding happy for some Time: but seeing the People quite ignorant of the true Knowledge of God, was grieved for want of Christian Fellowship; I therefore endeavoured to exhort my Neighbours to seek the Lord, as they really stood in Need of some one to teach them; for on a Sabbath Day, as I was coming from Church, I heard some of them boasting to each other, saying "What a famous Scholar our Minister is, his Learning is so great, that we do not understand the Half that he says!" I asked them what Advantage his Learning was to them, if they did not understand him, and also how many knew their Sins forgiven in his Congregation? They all declared that in this Life there was no such Knowledge to be obtained. I then insisted upon the Necessity of Men's knowing it; or at least to have a well grounded Hope, through Grace: and that the constitutional Doctrine of the Church of England agreed thereunto. This new Opinion, as they called it, soon spread about, which caused the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Society from Shaftsbury to come to see me. The Town by this Time began to be alarmed, at seeing so large a Company of Methodists, as they called them. Therefore when Preaching began, it being out of Doors, the Riot Act was read, and from that Time Persecution commenced against me through the whole Town; and the Minister every Sunday railed against the Methodists. And as my House was opened for all enlightened Ministers, therefore Satan's Revenge was the more against me, 'till at length the People withdrew all their Custom. After this I removed and came back to Wales; But have often wondered why the Lord suffered me to go to Gillingham to experience so much Trouble; but as our Lord must needs go thro' Samaria, to talk to the Woman at Jacob's Well, who brought the whole City to hear and believe on him: so there was a needs be for me to go to Gillingham, for a Foundation to write this Epistle; and I trust that more than the whole City of Samaria will see the Lord Jesus in it, and worship him no more on the Mountains of Ignorance, but worship God in Spirit and in Truth.

C O N T E N T S.

SECT. I. THE Necessity of the new Birth by the breathing Winds	Page 4
Converted Souls are hated by the unregenerate World	6
Blind leading the Blind will both fall into the Ditch	8
The Blood of Christ converts the Soul. Some are comfort- ed by the Spirit, 'till they experience <i>David's Joy</i> 9, &c.	
Men by Nature are dead in Unbelief, and are obliged to stand naked before God	15, &c.
The Wicked are Agents for Satan, 'till converted	18, 19
SECT. II. The Damn'd will curse blind Shepherds, who ad- vised them to gain Salvation by Works	21, 22, 23
Christ hath an Inkhorn to mark Mourners in <i>Sion</i>	30, 31
God's Love can't fail those who know Christ's Voice	39, 40
SECT. III. Justification by Faith. See <i>Church Article XI.</i>	45
<i>Naaman</i> by dipping seven Times is healed : in allusion to the seven Streams of Christ's Blood, which healeth the Church.	
Christ bore our Shame	48, 49, 52, 55.
Christ the holy Seed in the Virgin's Womb, and the Ark of the Covenant, wherein is the hidden Manna	60, 62
SECT. IV. <i>Israel</i> passed through the Red Sea, being a Type of Christ's Blood, which saveth Believers	68, 71
God puts <i>Moses</i> , a Type of the Church, into the Rock, a Type of Christ	72
God's Elect are created for his Glory, and drink of the Fountain of Life	77, 79
The Church compar'd to a Lily, the Glory of wise Shepherds	82
SECT. V. Angels at the Harvest of the World shall cast the Wicked into Hell	84, 85
God's Chosen made joyful by Showers of Grace	87, 92
SECT. VI. The Church shall receive the white Stone, viz. Absolution, and sit in Judgment with Christ. They must Fight to the End	96, 104
The Holy Ghost overshadowed the Virgin, so he must a Be- liever. As <i>Adam's</i> Wife was made of himself, so the Lamb's Wife is produced of himself	104, 112
SECT. VII. The Covenant of Grace before Time began	114, 115
Names written in the Lamb's Book of Life	122, 123, 124
The Prodigal became penitent, and was received	126
SECT. VIII. Predestination vindicated	130
No Works are acceptable before Faith	132
Man should not trust to his own Works	135
The Joys of the Spouse when wedded to Christ	136
The King of Glory openeth the Door by Love	137, 138
The Tree of Life in each Side of the River of God's Love	139
All who are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the Foundation of the World, shall worship the Beast	144
A Letter to the Vicar of <i>Gillingham</i>	148



C A V E 's

EPISTLE to *Gillingham,*

His native Town, near *Shaftsbury,*
in the County of *Dorset.*

WHEREIN IS EXHIBITED

A TOUCH-STONE *for the* SOUL, *the*
MARROW *or* QUINTESSENCE *of the*
GOSPEL, *and a Divine* LOOKING-
GLASS *to the* FAITHFUL, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12.

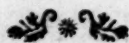
BRETHREN suck the HONEY from the fol-
lowing COMBS.

REMEMBER CHRIST *came unto his*
own, and his own received him not. But
as many as received him, to them gave he Power
to become the Sons of God: even to them that
believe on his Name, John i. 11, 12. As ma-
ny as received me (in the Name of CHRIST)
among you, had also Power to become the
Children of God, for those that receive the
Word receive the Blessing. GOD has bound

A

up

up his Testimonies (the Doctrine of CHRIST) among his Disciples: (secured it) from Everlasting to them, tho' hid from the World. Accordingly, CHRIST has fulfilled the Law, (in Time) and sealed the Salvation of his Church, or select People with his Blood, and reveal'd it by his Word and Spirit. Behold CHRIST and the Children in every Age, whom the LORD hath given him, are for *Signs and Wonders* in the Church, (especially to the unbelieving World) from the LORD, according to his Counsel who dwelleth in Mount Zion, *Isa. viii. 16, 17, 18.* Those that are taught of GOD should declare the Things of GOD: "As every one hath received the Gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of GOD," *1 Peter iv. 10.* It is Wisdom to do as CHRIST did, "the Work of him that sent him, while it is Day: when Night, or Death cometh, no Man can work," *John ix. 4.* *Let thy Testimonies be my counsellors,* saith the Psalmist, *Psal. cxix. 24.* So shall thy *Judgments be sweeter to me than Honey, or the Honey-Comb,* *Psal. xix. 9, 10.* May the Language of my Soul be like his, O Lord, *quicken me in thy Righteousness,* AMEN, *Psal. cxix. 40.*





EZEKIEL xxxvii. 9.

Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the Wind, prophecy, Son of Man, and say to the Wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four Winds, O Breath, and breathe upon these Slain, that they may live.

SECTION I.

All the Children of fallen Adam are spiritually and insensibly dead in the Valley of dry Bones; and continue so 'till the Spirit of the Lord convinces them of their Misery.

HEREAS the Almighty hath, I trust, called me into his Vineyard, *Matt. xx. 1.* And made me his willing Child in the Day of his Power, *Psal. cx. 3.* — I am therefore not my own, but am bought with a Price, and ought to glorify God with my Body, and Spirit, which are God's, *1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.* I was busy at my manual Employment on *November 19th, 1752,* when the Lord was pleased to engage my Thoughts on writing the following Discourse, on the above Portion of Scripture; and I was persuaded that many a poor Soul in

A 2

my

my own Town, who being ashamed, like *Nicodemus*, would not come under the Doctrine of enlightened Ministers, might notwithstanding have the Curiosity to read it when published: I say, many a *poor* Soul, for whether they are high or low with regard to Wealth, if they have not felt the Efficacy of those breathing Winds, they will find in a little Time that they are *poor, and blind, and naked*, Rev. iii. 17. And now my dear and well-beloved Neighbours, may the God of all Grace help you to consider whom those Winds were to breathe upon, even upon the whole House of *Israel*, the peculiar People of God, who were all circumcised at that Time, and were in as fair a Prospect to be saved as we are now, being baptized. How little Danger did they see themselves in, when the Almighty saw them all *dry Bones*? Why, they saw no more Danger in that Condition than most of us, and the rest of the unconverted, unrenewed, baptized Heathens, in this and other Nations do. But, O my Beloved, if you cannot see your Danger, turn to our Saviour's Discourse to *Nicodemus*, John iii. 3. where you will find him declare, *Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* The same heavenly Wind must breathe on all our dead Souls, or we are lost and undone for ever. Our Lord signified how those Winds operate on the new-born Soul: But his own Disciples were ignorant of the Scriptures, 'till they themselves received the breathing Winds of God's Holy Spirit, which gives Life to the Soul. He therefore *breathed* on them, and said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained,* John xx. 22, 23. Now they were become the spiritual Men who judge all Things; 'though they

they themselves were not to be judged of any unconverted Man, 1 Cor. ii. 15.

A natural Man cannot discern spiritual Things, for they are Foolishness unto him, before he has received those breathing Winds of God's Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Here St. Paul by Experience could argue after the same Manner as our Lord did to *Nicodemus*; and every true Believer can in his Measure confidently affirm the same: Therefore unless those Winds have breathed on thy Soul, thou art yet in the "Gall of Bitterness, and in the Bond of Iniquity;" *having no true saving Hope, and without God in the World*, Eph. ii. 12. "For no Man can call Christ Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," 1 Cor. ii. 14. If those Winds have not applied Christ unto thee, to save thee from the Guilt of Sin, thro' Faith in his Blood, thou art ignorant of the Efficacy of a Saviour: for it is written, "This is Life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," *John* xvii. 3. But if thou dost not know him, his Gospel is hid from thee. And the Apostle saith, "If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them who are lost," 2 Cor. iv. 3. A dreadful Condition, thus to be dead in the Valley of dry Bones; and not know it! "Awake, awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead, (dead by the Fall of *Adam*, dead in Sin) and Christ shall give thee Life," *Ephes.* v. 14. May the Lord help thee, (for thou canst not help thyself) to come out of the Grave of Nature, and like *Lazarus*, hear the Voice of the Son of God, when he saith, "I am the Resurrection, and the Life; if any Man believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die," *i. e.* eternally, *John* xi, 25, 26. It is a blessed Condition thus
to

to be risen by Assurance of Faith with Christ, whereby we seek the Things which are above; for where a Man's Treasure is, there is his Heart also. A brave Condition, my Friends, to be chosen out of the World! I do not wonder that the World hateth me. "If the World hateth you, (saith Christ) ye know that it hated me before it hated you, but now it hateth you on my Account." Ah! foolish World, to hate such great Love as is found in Christ and his People for precious, never-dying Souls. "If ye were of the World (saith Christ) the World would love his own, but because ye are not of the World, but I have chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hateth you. Remember the Word that I said unto you, The Servant is not greater than his Lord: If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you: if they have kept my Saying, they will keep yours also," *John* xv. 18, 19, 20.

Now my Beloved, (ye People of *Gillingham*) if ye were not asleep, sure this single Testimony of the Son of God, (who could not err in his Judgment) must, and would alarm your Consciences on Account of your Behaviour to me since I have returned among you. What Reason have you for hating and backbiting me with Lies, Slander, and Defamation; seeing you cannot justly charge me with any Thing vile or base in my Character from my Youth up 'till I went abroad, nor since I returned Home? And during the ten Years of my Absence, all my Acquaintance can testify they saw no vile Behaviour in me in those Places where Providence cast my Lot, and where by lawful Employment and honest Industry I was enabled to support my Family; though your Friendship and Custom are both withdrawn, since I made a Profession of Christ; and thereby you have compelled

led me to wander as a Pilgrim from my native Place, bearing his Cross. God grant that none of you may hear these Words from him in the Day of Judgement, "I was an hungred, and ye gave me no Meat: thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink: naked, and ye cloathed me not, &c." And you answer, "When saw we thee in this Distress, and did not administer Help unto thee?" And Jesus answering, "Forasmuch as ye did it not unto the least of my Brethren, (who bore my Image, which ye hated ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into everlasting Punishment:" but they who love Christ's Image in his People, and relieve the Distressed, shall go into *Life eternal*, Matt. xxv. 42, &c. Now observe, this everlasting Fire, of which Christ speaks, was *prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, not for you, my Neighbours; but if you join with the Devil, to hate God and persecute his People, you may thank yourselves for it, if you suffer the same Fate, for Christ has given you Warning. But why should I expect better Treatment? "he that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer Persecution, 2 Tim. iii. 12. "And be hated of all (ungodly) Men for Christ's sake," Matt. x. 22. Yea, even by unfeeling Preachers of the Gospel, which has been the Case with me; for however preposterous the Conduct, and horrible to relate your Minister is turn'd a Railer from the Pulpit, against the Cause of Christ and his People. May the Lord awaken all such to see their Error, (and you also) for they ought to be Eyes to you who are blind, Job xxix. 15. Behold! I feel a Sympathy for my native Town; methinks I taste that Compassion for you which Jesus felt for *Jerusalem*, when he cry'd, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto

unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, but ye would not!" *Matt.* xxiii. 37. Even so do I find the same Spirit cry in my Soul, O *Gillingham, Gillingham*, thou that hatest God's Messengers who warned thee to *flee from the Wrath to come*; how often did I exhort thee to repent and believe the blessed Gospel, and contend for the Faith of God's Elect, "which was once delivered unto the Saints?" *Jude* 3. "without which it is impossible to please God!" "Yet the more I loved you, the less was I beloved of you," *2 Cor.* xii. 15. But remember our Lord's Words, "If the Blind lead the Blind, both shall fall into the Ditch," *Matt.* xv. 14. May the Lord open your Eyes, that you like holy *David* thro' the Meditation of the Scriptures may become wiser than your Teachers, *Psal.* cxix. 99. But the Children of the Bond-Woman will be always persecuting those of the Free, *Gal.* iv. 29. Even they whom the Son hath made free, and are *free indeed*, *John* viii. 36. But what faith the Scriptures? "Cast out the Bond-Woman, (the Doctrine of Self-righteousness, the Devil's Nurse) and her Son, (the haughty Self-justifier, the Devil's scoffing Seed) for he shall not be Heir, (or co-inherit) with the Son of the Free-Woman," *Gen.* xxi. 10. For as *Jerusalem* which is above, is free, and is the Mother of all Believers: so nominal *Jerusalem* below, thro' Unbelief, is in Bondage, which is the Mother and Fosterer of all Persecutions, *Gal.* iv. 26. But Satan will roar, when he has lost a Soul from his Service; and especially one who beats up for Volunteers, and inlists Soldiers for the King of Glory. *Lost* in the Devil's Scroll, is *gain'd* in Christ's Book! So Satan's Sorrow, is Heaven's Joy, and our Comfort. Come my fellow Sinners

Sinners and beloved Neighbours, seek ye the Lord, as (thro' Grace) I have done, 'till you have found him; and then, Angels shall also rejoice on Account of your Conversion. I tell you, there shall be Joy in Heaven over every Soul that repenteth, *Luke* xv. 7. Repent therefore of every evil Habit, of every Sin in Heart and Life; "and turn unto the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon you, and to our God (I speak from Experience, and I know) he will abundantly pardon," *Isa.* lv. 7. For with our God there is plenteous Redemption. The Blood of Christ is infinitely meritorious, and unspeakably efficacious. Repent, I say, and believe, and you shall receive the Testimony of the Holy Ghost; though like those Disciples of old, ye have not yet known him, *Act.* xix. 2. Even the Spirit of Truth, which shall guide you into all Truth, and bring all Things to your Remembrance, whatsoever the Lord hath said unto you in Times past, by hearing or reading his Gospel, *John* xiv. 26. Which now the Devil steals away from you, and makes your Reading and Hearing become unfruitful, *Luke* viii. 12. I say (happy Souls) you shall receive the Anointing, which shall abide in you, and then you need not that any Man teach you, (your Faith shall not rest on any Man's Word) for the same Anointing will teach you all Things, *1 John* ii. 27. Thus, I say, those anointing Winds, or his overshadowing Presence who form'd the Creation, shall breathe on your slain and dead Souls, and you shall live, believe and never die, *John* xi. 25, 26. Then you shall know the Blessedness of the Heaven-born Soul, "who is called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb," *Rev.* xix. 9. Likewise you shall know the Meaning of the XIIIth Article of our Church, which saith, "Works done before the Grace of

Christ, and the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, (which is the breathing Wind) hath the Nature of Sin, and are not acceptable to God." Then you shall also know that the Holy Ghost must sanctify you *and all the elect People of God*, before they can be saved; [as mentioned in the Church Catechism]. You shall also know what *Job* tasted or felt in his Soul, when by Virtue of those Winds he could say, *I know my Redeemer liveth*, Job xix. 25. If Christ was in you, the *Hope* of Glory, Col. i. 27. then you would understand the Language of the Apostle when he said, *I know in whom I have believed*, 2 Tim. i. 12. You would know also what the Apostle *John* says, *We know that we are of God, and the whole World* (of slain and dead Souls, never breathed upon, not revived by the Spirit of Grace) *lieth in Wickedness*, 1 John v. 19. Then he who is the Husband of his Church, even Christ Jesus, would be often calling after you, saying *Rise up, my Love, my fair one, and come away. For lo! the Winter is past, the Time of the Singing of Birds is come, and the Voice of the Turtle is heard in our Land. The Vines with the tender Grape give a delightful Smell*, Cant. ii. 10, 11, 12, 13. Unbelief and Doubting would be over: Peace and Joy in believing would abound: the charming Turtle, the Spirit of Christ, by the Gospel of free Salvation, would charm your Souls: Christ and you would be one, as Husband and Wife are one; therefore he says, not the Land, but *our Land*, Cant. ii. 12. Moreover he would be your Vine, and you should be his Branches: in your Hearts would hang the Grapes (viz.) Christ's Graces, "the Fruits of his Spirit, Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, and Temperance; against such there is no Law," Gal. v. 22, 23. The Devil cannot reach those to accuse them before

before God, and therefore he endeavours to depreciate their Worth, by calling their Good, *Evil*. He despises them in God's People, and calls them *four*; and indeed they are far from being palatable to the natural Man, who thinks it preposterous and absurd to become a Fool to the World, that he may be wise and win Christ. For those Graces which are the Principle of "the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, do make us free from the Law of Sin and Death," *Rom. viii. 2.* Being thus renewed, you would cry Day and Night like God's Elect for compleat Deliverance, *Luke xviii. 7.* and reiterate the Language of the Spouse, "Awake, O North-wind, and come thou South-wind, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out." Nothing would content you unless your Husband be present! He must come into your Souls, and sup with you, and entertain you with his own pleasant Fruits; I say *His*, for they are the Produce of his Garden, *Cant. iv. 16.* And having experienced the salutary Effects of those breathing Winds, you will be calling after them as long as you live; and at Death you'll prove them to be the fiery Chariot of God's Love that shall carry you to Glory, *2 Kings ii. 11.* Christ your Husband having loved you once, he will love you to the End, *John xiii. 1.* And this shall be your Comfort, "Before you call, he will answer, and while you are yet speaking, he will hear," *Isa. lxxv. 24.* As it is observable in this Place, for the Spouse having called in the Close of Chap. IV. Christ answers her in the Beginning of Chap. V. "I am come into my Garden (thy Soul) my Sister, my Spouse; I have gathered my Myrrh with my Spice, I have eaten my Honey-comb with my Honey, I have drunk my Wine with my Milk: eat, O Friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O Beloved,"

Cant. v. 1. In like Manner the Prophet invites to suck the Breast of *Gospel Consolation*, preached first at *Jerusalem*, and “with Joy to draw the Water out of (Christ) the *Well* of Salvation,” *Isa.* xii. 3. And again, “Come buy Wine and Milk, without Money, and without Price,” *Isa.* lv. 1. Here he’ll feed your hungry Souls with good Things, when the Self-righteous, who think themselves rich, and attempt to bring their own Goodness in Exchange for heavenly Commodities, shall be sent *empty* away, *Luke* i. 53. Here, *viz.* in his Banqueting-House, in spiritual Communion, you may drink ’till you are sick of Love! If so, then will you intreat your heavenly Husband to stay you with Flaggons, and comfort you with apples, being sick of Love: who presently will put his left Hand under your Head, and his right Hand to embrace you, *Cant.* ii. 4, 5, 6. with Promises of temporal and spiritual Mercies to sustain you, *Deut.* xxxiii. 25. Thus you will know King *David*’s Experience, when he said, “My cup doth overflow,” *Psal.* xxiii. 5. These were the joyful Winds which breathed on him when he danced before the Ark, *2 Sam.* vi. 14. Perhaps you will say, “Those Qualifications for Heaven are not to be attained in these Days; and that which the Religious, those called *Methodists*, or others, pretend to, is only Enthusiasm.” Oh! my Friends, take Care, for this is Satan’s Suggestion to deceive your precious Souls; and “he doth deceive with all Unrighteousness them that perish, because they believe not in Christ, because they receive not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved. For this Cause God sends them strong Delusions, that they should believe a Lie: that they all might be damned, who believe not the Truth, but have Pleasure in Unrighteousness. But Believers (of whatever Denomination, though stigmatized

stigmatized with the Name of *Methodists*) are bound to give Thanks unto God, because he hath from the Beginning chosen us to Salvation, thro' Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth," 2 *Thes.* ii. 10, 11, 12, 13. And unless this be your State, and such be your Experience, you are yet Bond-slaves to Satan, led captive some Way or other by your sinful Lusts: spiritually dead, whilst bodily alive; and therefore in the same Predicament with those whom our Saviour refers to when he said, *Let the Dead bury their Dead*, Mat. viii. 22. And in a Condition similar to the Blind that cannot see far off, 2 *Peter* i. 9. Can a Child in the Womb see the Light of the World? No, he cannot; neither can you see the Light of the Kingdom of Grace whilst you are unregenerate, and shut up in Unbelief. You are Strangers to the Character of *the Meek* whom God guides in Judgment, *Psal.* xxv. 9. You know not the Benefit of being "delivered from the Power of Darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son." The Subjects of his Kingdom enjoy his marvellous Light, and "have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins," *Col.* i. 13, 14. But you are among the Number of those who are unconcerned about their Souls' Health, and at Ease in *Zion*, against whom there is a heavy Woe pronounced, *Amos* vi. 1. You are *dead* in the Valley of dry Bones, and consequently insensible of your Condition, *Ezek.* xxxvii. 1. Did ever Christ by his Spirit convince your Souls "of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgment," *John* xvi. 8. *Of Sin, because you did not believe on him*: a Work, nevertheless, which none can do 'till they have received Power from God, to burst the Bonds of Unbelief, and escape from the Dominion of Sin. The Saviour's Name is *JESUS*, because he saves his
 People

People from their Sins! *from*, not in their Sins. Did ever the Word of God affect your Souls with such Power that you acknowledged it was " sharper than any two edged Sword, dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints and Marrow?" *Heb. iv. 12.* That you cry'd out like the trembling Jailer, *Ob Sirs! what must I do to be saved?* *Act. xvi. 29, 30.* Or like the Publican, *Lord be merciful to me a Sinner!* not daring to lift up your guilty Eyes to Heaven, *Luke xviii. 13.* but ready, if possible, to run away from God, like *Adam*, and to hide yourselves from his holy Presence, *Gen. iii. 8.* — Did you ever perceive your spiritual Nakedness and Shame by Reason of your eating the forbidden Fruit, having done that which you ought not to have done? Perhaps you'll say you are not guilty: What, not guilty of any known Sin which tasted sweet to your corrupt Nature in all your Life? Yes, a few Sins, I suppose, you'll own: If so, did ever the Spirit of Christ convince you of those few Sins, and that the Wages thereof is death: and especially of the worst Sin (perhaps never thought of) *viz.* the damning Sin of Unbelief, for there is no Salvation out of Christ? "Go ye into all the World (says Christ himself) and preach the Gospel to every Creature: He that believeth and is baptized (with the Holy Ghost) shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned," *Mark xvi. 16, 17.*

Now, to believe is no less than to receive Forgiveness of Sins, by Faith, through the Merits of the Blood and Righteousness of the Lamb: And "being thus justified by Faith, we have Peace with God," *Rom. v. 1.* Thus the Spirit of Christ doth and will, as a Prophet reprove, and convince every Soul that shall be saved of the Sin of Unbelief: and oblige them to acknowledge "our Hope

is lost, we are cut off for our Parts," *Ezek. xxxvii.*

11. And to cry, *What shall we do to be saved?* Now in such a Condition the Baptism of *John* will be accepted, even his Baptism of Repentance for the *Remission of Sins*, *Luke iii. 3.* Then will you begin to sew your Fig Leaves together, your ragged filthy Righteousness, to cover your shameful Nakedness, *Isa. lxiv. 6.* And then shall you hear the awful Voice of God calling after you, and saying as he did to *Adam*, *Where art thou?* Then will you tremble and seek to hide yourselves, and confess to God, like him, *I am afraid, because I am naked!* And God will reply, *Who told thee thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the forbidden Fruit?* *Gen. iii. 10, 11.* Your trembling Souls shall then be sensible, not only of Guilt, but Pollution, "from the Crown of the Head to the Sole of the Foot, full of Wounds, Bruises, and putrifying Sores," *Isa. i. 6.* Odious and loathsome in your own Eyes: and yet obliged in this Condition to stand before the dreadful Sovereign, the awful Judge of all the Earth, whose Presence is ten thousand Times brighter than the Sun, *Eccle. xxiii. 19.* Before whom the Cherubims cover their Faces, because of the Splendor and Brightness of his Glory. I say, you must give an Answer to this "high and lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity," *Isa. lv. 15.* This nevertheless is the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, who is come to seek after his lost Sheep, *Luke xv. 4.* And here you would be in a great Strait, between Hope and Despair, not knowing what to answer: and you would still be afraid to own yourself guilty, for fear God would not be gracious to you, and forgive you. And therefore as *Adam* put off the Blame from himself to his Wife, so would you Sinners put off the Blame to your depraved Nature. And if God accuse the
Wife,

Wife, corrupt Nature, it will endeavour to excuse itself, and lay the Fault upon the Serpent, the Devil. *Adam*, we know, blam'd the *Woman which God gave him*. The Woman whom *thou gavest* to be with me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat, *Gen. iii. 12.* Tacitly blaming God for giving him such a Creature, who enticed him to Sin. And when God said unto the Woman, *What is this that thou hast done?* she imputes her Disobedience to the *Serpent*. Here we may see how loath a Man is in his natural State to own himself guilty of Condemnation. *Adam* hearkened to the Instigation of the Devil, who told him, as he did *Eve*, that he should not surely die, *Gen. iii. 4.* but that his Excuse and his Fig-leaf Covering should screen him from the Wrath of the Almighty, and keep him safe on the Wild Olive Tree (Nature's Hope). So when the Spirit of Christ carries Conviction to the Heart, we strive to put the Fault on our depraved Nature, saying, "All have their Failings! and flatter ourselves that by our future Amendments (Fig-leaf Righteousness) we shall be saved: 'till Sin, by the Law, slay us, and we are convinced of our Inability, and obliged to cry, *Guilty, guilty.* Then we see our Fig-leaf Covering (moral Honesty) will not save our guilty Souls. Now we find ourselves dead, dry Bones, driven out from the Presence of God. Thus did *Adam* see himself, when driven out of the Garden, excluded from the Tree of Life, and doom'd to Labour and Sorrow, *Gen. iii. 24.* But the Almighty Jehovah, the Disposer of all Events, knowing, as the Scripture says, "That Offences must come, but woe to him by whom the Offence cometh," *Matt. xviii. 7.* pronounced the Curse on the first Offender, the Serpent; and exhibited the gracious Purpose of Salvation contained in the Promise to *Adam*, viz. *That the Seed of the Woman*

Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head. And I (saith God) *will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed: it shall bruise thy Head* (thou Devil), *and thou shalt bruise his Heel*, Gen. iii. 15. Here is God's Decree, that Christ the *Seed* of the Woman being sown in the Believer's Heart, by God the Father, who is the Husbandman, through the Operation of the Holy Ghost, in them who are his Husbandry, shall bruise the Serpent's Head in them. And this *Seed* is verily the Kingdom of Heaven, which our Lord saith is like unto *Leaven, which a Woman took and hid in three Measures of Meal, 'till the whole was leavened*, Matt. xiii. 33. And this is the *Seed* that remaineth in God's Children, so that they cannot love Sin, because they are thus *born of God*, 1 John iii. 9. And the Devil being cursed because he beguiled the Woman which God had created upright, is a Prisoner in Chains; decreed to crawl on his Belly, never to look up to Heaven for Mercy; and permitted only to bruise Christ's Heel in his Church militant. For as Heaven is God's Throne, so Earth is his Footstool, *Act. vii. 49*. And he delights to walk among his golden Candlesticks, *Rev. ii. 1*. And fills them full of Peace and Joy in Believing, *Rom. xv. 13*. Which stirreth up Wrath in Satan, and his Agents, and causeth him to assault God's People with diverse Temptations, and so bruises Christ's Heel in them, "by grieving that Holy Spirit of Christ, wherewith they are sealed to the Day of Redemption," *Eph. iv. 30*. Thus he quenqueth the Spirit of Consolation in God's People, by seducing them to Sin, whereby they are deprived of the Joy of his Countenance for a Season. "For what Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness? and what Communion hath Light with Darknes? and what

Concord hath Christ with Belial?" 2 *Cor.* vi. 14, 15. Or worldly Men with Saints, who are to judge the World? 1 *Cor.* vi. 2. "The Wicked (saith Christ) are of their Father the Devil, and the Works of their Father they do," *John* viii. 44. They are grovelling and crawling always for the filthy Lucre of this World, eating Gold-dust. Adding House to House, and Field to Field. Thus "they lick the Dust like a Serpent, and move out of their Holes like Worms of the Earth," *Mic.* vii. 17. "They pant after the Dust of the Earth," instead of the Bread and Water of Life, *Am.* ii. 7. And being Agents for the Devil (as the Serpent was) through their own Choice, the Curse of God likewise falls on them, 2 *Peter* ii. 14. Whilst they who are risen with Christ, notwithstanding all Oppositions, continue to "seek those Things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the Right Hand of God. Their Affections are set on Things above, not on Things on the Earth. And they being dead to the World, and their Life hid with Christ in God. Therefore, when Christ, who is their Life, shall appear, they also shall appear with him in Glory," *Col.* iii. 1, 2, 3, 4. Now although this Seed of the Woman (who is said elsewhere to be the "Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World" *Rev.* xiii. 8. was appointed of God, and promised to *Adam*, to destroy in him the Works of the Devil; yet God knew that the Devil would endeavour to delude *Adam* to neglect the Promise, and try to make himself happy again by his own Endeavours, independent of the Grace of God; presumptuously snatching at the Fruit of the Tree of Life, without being beholden to the Righteousness of God; building his *Babel* Tower of *Self-Righteousness* to reach Heaven, *Gen.* xi. 4. "Therefore the Lord God drove him out of the Garden of
Eden

Eden (lest he should attempt to take of the Tree of Life), to till the Ground from whence he was taken, and placed at the End of the Garden of *Eden*, Cherubims, and a flaming Sword, to keep the Way of the Tree of Life," *Gen.* iii. 22, 23, 24. Here, notwithstanding the Messiah, the Pearl of great Price, *Matt.* xiii. 46. was promised, yet it was so hid in the Field of God's Purpose and Providence, that *Adam* must seek after it 'till God in Mercy thought proper he should find it. Thus was poor *Adam*, the lost Sinner convinced of Sin, whereby he saw the Wages thereof was Death, but that it must be the free Gift of God to bestow Life, and also to lead Men to Christ to have eternal Life, *Rom.* vi. 23. Poor *Adam*, where art thou now? the flaming Sword keeps thee from Presumption! the Promise of the Messiah keeps thee from Despair! now thou art cast out to till the *Ground*, in order to prepare thy Heart; to root out the Thorns and Thistles; to cultivate thy corrupt Nature, to receive the immortal Seed, and bring it to it's primitive Purity. Poor *Adam* (poor Sinner) view thy sad Situation, seriously reflect on the Condition of thy Soul! Here thou mayest dig after Happiness, but canst never of thyself find it. *The Depth saith, It is not in me: and the Sea saith, It is not in me,* *Job* xxviii. 14. Alas! where is the wise Man? where is the Scribe? where is the proud Free-willer now? where is the unconverted, whole-hearted, boasting *Pharise* now? Like as the Priests, so are the People; blind Leaders of the Blind; who (without the New-birth) must both fall into the Ditch; *Matt.* xv. 14.

O Lord our God! forasmuch as this Ditch is the unfathomable bottomless Pit, where Hope never comes, and the Fire is never quenched, prepared for the Devil

and his Angels : wherein all the unregenerate Race of Adam are likewise threatened to be punished. Teach us, O Lord, the Language of thy Spouse, to cry, Behold ! how beautiful are the Feet of them who bring us good Tidings of great Joy. We plainly see that the Harvest is plenteous, but the Labourers are few : O mayest thou, who art the Lord of the Harvest, send us such faithful, enlightened Ministers, as might shew us the right Way to eternal Life, lest our Souls are lost (in this sulphurous Gulph) for lack of Knowledge, Hof. iv. 6.



S E C T. II.

When the Spirit of the Lord shews the Sinner his lost Condition by Nature, he flees to the Covenant of Works for Salvation, and like his Father Adam, Jews Fig Leaves together to cover his Shame, endeavouring to palliate his Crime, and make Peace with God's broken Law, and so continues on the wild Olive Tree.

O Let the Preacher beg of God to humble the Pride of Man in himself first, and then he will see the Necessity of the People's Conversion in order to Christian Conversation. Let not Ministers of Congregations prophesy smooth Things to the People, pretending they are all Christians, because they were baptized with Water ; (which is only an outward Sign of the inward and spiritual Grace) when very few, in Comparison, are baptized with the Holy Ghost, which they must be, if they be
born

born again : And unless Men are born again, they cannot see the Kingdom of God, *John* iii. 3. "Wo is me ! (saith the Church) for I am as when they have gathered the Summer-fruits, as the Grape-gleanings of the Vintage : there is no Cluster to eat (no Entertainment for God) though his Soul desires the first ripe Fruits," *Mic.* vii. 1. God's People are few in Number, and his elect Children often go astray, which seems to grieve him, and make him cry, *Turn ! O backsliding Children, for I am married unto you : and I will take you one of a City, and two of a Family, and bring you to Zion,* *Jer.* iii. 14. By the few in Number which go to Heaven, according to the foregoing Scriptures, one might easily be induced to believe and acknowledge the Propriety of what our Lord Jesus said in this Respect, "Enter ye in at the strait Gate ; for wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth to Destruction, and many there be which go in thereat : Because strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it," *Matt.* vii. 13, 14. What depth of Thought can conceive, the Curses the Damned in Hell will pronounce against such foolish Shepherds, who have deluded them thither : who took upon them the Care of precious, immortal Souls, to lead them safe to Heaven, only for the sake of *filthy Lucre*, *1 Tim.* iii. 3, 8. "They ran (saith God) but I never sent them," *Jer.* xxiii. 21. Strangers to vital Religion : having not received the Spirit of Adoption, enabling them to cry, *Abba, Father.* Neither did the Spirit ever bear witness with their Spirits, that they were his Children, *Rom.* viii. 15, 16. Destitute of divine Grace to assist them in so arduous a Work. God declares he will require his People's Blood at such Teachers' Hands, *Ezek.* xxxiv. 10. "For my People perish (saith the Lord)

for

for lack of Knowledge," *Hes.* iv. 6. "For what Man knoweth the Things of a Man, save the Spirit of Man which is in him? even so the Things of God knoweth no (natural) Man, but he only who hath the Spirit of God dwelling in him," *1 Cor.* ii. 11. "The Spirit searcheth all Things, yea, the deep Things of God," verse 10. "And those that have not the Spirit of Christ (whether Preachers or Hearers) are none of his," *Rom.* viii. 9. What Business then have such People to presume to untold the sacred Mysteries of the Word of God, or take God's Covenant into their Mouth? seeing they hate to be reformed, and cast his Commandments behind their Backs, *Psal.* l. 16, 17. Whose Eyes never saw, whose Hands never handled the Word of Life, *1 John* i. 1. The Holy Ghost (the Fountain of all Truth) describes such Watchmen to be "*blind and ignorant, nay, dumb Dogs, that cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.*" Heedless of the Condition of every Soul whose Lot it is to be under such Pastor's Care. And yet, "greedy dogs which can never have enough, Shepherds that cannot understand, every one looking (sharp) for his Gain, from his Quarter," *Esa.* lvi. 10, 11. They relinquish no Perquisite, spare no Fleece that can be had, though the Sheep want it to screen them from the nipping Cold. Therefore thus saith the Lord, "Woe be to the Shepherds of Israel that feed themselves? should not the Shepherds feed the Flocks?" *Ezek.* xxxiv. 2. But some may think me too aggravating, and will say, Stop Friend! wilt thou not affront many by dealing so plainly? Yes, I know I shall affront those whom the Truth gauls; and I know Satan will stir up his People against me, as he has done already: and I know he will rage, but I am fore-warned whom to fear: Christ bids me

me "fear not Man, but God, who is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him, *Luke* xii. 5.

Question, But is it so bad with us now, or are we in like Circumstances with *Adam* when he was driven out from the Presence of God?

Answer, Yes, the very same; "For we by Nature are all born Children of Wrath, even as others," *Eph.* ii. 3. And until we are born again of the Spirit, and baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire, the Fire of God's Love, "we are Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, Strangers to the Covenants of Promise, having no true, saving Hope, and without God in the World," *Eph.* ii. 12. And alas! how loath we are when Storms arise to cast our Anchor of Hope on firm Ground: for as soon as Christ by his Spirit has convinced us of Sin, we presently endeavour to secure our Souls on the quick Sands of Self-righteousness, or like *Adam* to cover our Nakedness with the Fig-leaves of formal Obedience: and although God says, *The Soul that sinneth shall die*; yet the Devil suggests, *We shall not surely die*, but by our Amendment we may excuse ourselves: prompting us presumptuously, as he did our Mother *Eve*, to take the forbidden Fruit: so now, (notwithstanding the Seraphic Swordsmen) to snatch at the Tree of Life, as we vainly suppose it to be, viz. the Covenant of Works to be performed by us for our Salvation. And if we cannot live as well as we would, yet we hope God will be merciful, for we endeavour to keep the whole Law as well as we can, and trust God for the Rest. Here I think you'll say, This cannot be the Advice of Satan; for who can do more than this? Ah! my dear Neighbours, beware, look well to yourselves, for Satan lies in wait to deceive. Our Lord saith, "Many shall
come

come in that Day and say, Lord open to me, for I have eaten and drank in thy Presence, and in thy Name cast out Devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful Works. But Christ will say, I know you not, depart from me ye Workers of Iniquity," *Luke* xiii. 27. And we are forbidden to look after Salvation by a Covenant of Works: "Why spend ye your Money for that which is not Bread? and your Labour for that which satisfieth not?" *Isa.* lv. 2. Your good Works (being imperfect) cannot justify you in the Sight of God: "For by the Works of the Law no Flesh shall be saved," *Gal.* ii. 16. The Serpent knows of the flaming Sword, which turns every Way to keep the Way of the Tree of Life: viz. The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, *Eph.* vi. 17. which God has placed to keep Rebels out of Paradise, in these Words, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all* Things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them, *Gal.* iii. 10. "And whereas all our Righteousnesses are but as filthy Rags," *Isa.* lxxv. 6. And when we have done all the Good that is possible, we are still but *unprofitable Servants*, *Luke* xvii. 10. Therefore now behold and see that the Devil is leading you to Presumption, hurrying you on, impotent as you are, through vain Conceit of prevailing against the Dint of the Sword, the flaming Sword of God's Word (appointed by him to humble the Pride of Man) attempting to clime the Tree of Life through your own natural Ability, whether God will or not. But, alas! poor lost Sons of *Adam*, you must yet according to God's Command till the Ground from whence you were taken. God made your Father *Adam* out of good Earth before it was cursed; and when he had made him, Behold! he was *very good*, *Gen.* i. 31. But his Sin became your Sin, and the Ground of
your

your Nature in him, being accursed originally by his Fall, and since, by your own Transgressions: Therefore God also sends you out (and every one he intends to save) to till the ground of your own Hearts; to break up the fallow Ground; to root out the Thorns and Thistles (your Sins) from thence, and to make yourselves holy as your Nature was (in *Adam*) at first, which you can never do: For *no Man can quicken his own Soul*, Psal. xxii. 29. And this the Lord does that Man might see his lost Condition; and that he can no more change his Heart than the *Ethiop* his Skin, until the Lord Jehovah puts his Hand to the Work: then will appear some evident Signs of Restoration to Life; as it follows in the Subject under Consideration.

“ And when I beheld, lo! the Sinnews and the Flesh came up upon them, and the Skin covered them above, but there was no Breath in them.” God by his Spirit had been tilling the Ground of their Hearts, ’till they were afraid of Hell and eternal Damnation. “ Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the Wind, prophecy, Son of Man, and say to the Wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four Winds, O Breath, and breathe upon these Slain, that they may live! *Ezek. xxxvii. 8, 9.* God works in a miraculous Manner to deliver his Church: He brought his *Israel* of old out of Captivity, when they were oppressed and under the Dispensation of the Law. In a similar Manner he now miraculously delivers his Church out of the Bondage of Sin and the Slavery of the Devil, under the Dispensation of the Gospel, when all human Help fails. Here you may see that it is God who prepares the Hearts of his People, viz. the whole House of *Israel* ever since the Fall of *Adam*, in order to receive his Grace; they being in the Sight of God *dead, in the Valley of dry Bones*, as

will appear : for after all the Noise, and the Shaking, and the Trembling, which the Spirit of God had brought on them, through Conviction, for Fear of the high and lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity : yet they were still in a state of Death, for there was no ipiritual Breath in them, *Ezek. xxxvii. 8.* For besides *Repentance towards God*, there must be *Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*, *Act. xx. 21.* Which those poor Souls as yet had not. But mark his holy Word ! “ To this Man will I look, even to him that is poor (in Spirit) and of a contrite Heart, and trembleth at my Word,” *Isa. lxvi. 2.* The Lord looked in Mercy on those trembling Souls, and call’d for his four Winds, even his Holy Spirit which fills all Worlds, to breathe Life into their prepared Hearts, in order to apply the Merits and effects of the Life, Death, Resurrection and Intercession of *The Lord our Righteousness* unto their tainting Souls. Then they find the *Pearl of great Price*, CHRIST JESUS, hid in the Field of God’s secret Counsel, *Matt. xiii. 46.* Which no Man can know, or come unto, unless the Father *draw* and teach him, *John vi. 44.* Here the new Wine is put into new Bottles, and both preserved, *Matt. ix. 17.* The Souls of poor, repenting Sinners are made meet to receive Grace (*Article xiii.*) But if the proud *Pbarisee*, the whole-hearted, unconverted Man was to have a Taste of God’s gracious Presence, as *Saul* had in Company with *David* ; and as *Judas* had when among the Apostles : this new Wine put into their old Bottles (unprepared Hearts, never refined in the Fire of true Conviction, nor made meet for the Master’s Use, would, through Pride, break the Bottles, and both *Wine and Bottles perish*, *Matt. ix. 17.* Thus does God, by his *breathing Winds*, bring poor, weary, despairing Tillers of the Ground unto
Christ,

Christ, when they have been a convenient Time under the Discipline of the Law, which is their School-master, teaching them to lay hold of the Righteousness of Christ, *Gal. iii. 24.* "But after Faith is come, we are no longer under a School-master (saith the Apostle) for we are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus," ver. 25, 26. Christ is the End of the Law for *Righteousness* to every one that believeth, *Rom. x. 4.* For "this is his Name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,**" *Jer. xxiii. 6.* Thus poor heavy-laden Sinners, having try'd to the utmost to be saved by the Law of Works, and yet continue in their wretched State, conscious of Guilt, and condemned by the Law, that flaming Sword which turneth every Way, to withstand presumptuous Sinners; at length makes them glad to be pluckt from the wild Olive, *Self*, and to be engrafted into the good Olive Tree, even Christ, to be saved by the free Grace of God. And then they begin to confess with Saint *Paul*, "By Grace we are saved, through Faith, in the Merits of Christ's Blood; so that it is not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God, not of Works, lest any Man should boast," *Eph. ii. 8, 9.* Now the Soul being convinced of Righteousness, as well as of Sin; that is, of the Necessity and sufficiency of Christ's Righteousness, and sensible of the damning Nature of Sin, and his own Inability to believe in Christ's Righteousness, not knowing his Interest in him. Now, I say, when the Understanding is enlightened to know what true Righteousness is, the poor Sinner will loath himself, and esteem Christ precious! and like *St. Paul*, he would not have on his own Righteousness, which is of the Law, to appear in Judgment, even though it seemed to be blameless, but the Righteousness that is of Faith, even Faith in the

Son of God: which is the approved Wedding-Garment, required of God in holy Scripture, and renders the Soul a worthy Communicant at God's holy Table. For the believing Soul has the Honour to become the Bride, the Lamb's Spouse, hearkens to his Counsel, and buys of him white Raiment (without Money) that she might be clothed; least the Shame of her Nakedness should appear, which Fig-leaf Righteousness could not cover, *Rev.* iii. 18. And now she is admitted to his Banqueting-house, and his Banner over her is Love, *Cant.* ii. 4. Now by Faith she can see that the Prince of this World (her former cruel Master) who kept her in Chains, is judged, and condemn'd as an Usurper, *John* xvi. 8, 11. And now, this being the Case, what think you, my Friends, of the Doctrine delivered? are these the Words of Truth and Sobriety? I hope, at least, you will no longer contemptuously call it *Entbusiasm!*

I suppose you will say, you cannot tell what to think of it: if so, suspend your Judgment 'till you have found out where true Wisdom (viz. Christ) dwelleth; and desire him to anoint your Eyes with Eye Salve, that you may see; and give you the hearing Ear, that you may hear; and illuminate your Understanding which is yet dark through the Ignorance that is in you, *Eph.* iv. 18. And labour to know what Saint Paul meant when he said, "I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you a chaste Virgin to Christ," *2 Cor.* xi. 2. And again, "My little Children, of whom I travail in Birth again until Christ be formed in you," *Gal.* iv. 19. "Which is Christ in you (Believers) the Hope of Glory," *Col.* i. 27. If his Image which we lost by Adam's Fall be restored in us, it will be Life eternal to know not only God the Father reconciled unto us, but Jesus Christ

Christ whom he hath sent to perform the glorious Work of Man's Redemption, by his spotless Obedience, by his precious Blood, and his gracious Spirit working in our Hearts, *John xvii. 3.* But we cannot know the Father, but by the Son's Spirit, for *no Man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him, Matt. xi. 27.*

Therefore, unless you have received those *breathing Winds*, even the Spirit of Christ, ye neither know the Son, nor the Father; *For if you have not the Spirit of Christ, ye are none of his, Rom. viii. 9.*

“ But there is now no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh but after the Spirit. For the Law of the Spirit of Life which we have received in Christ Jesus, makes us free from the Law of Sin and Death. For what the Law could not do in us, in that it was weak by Reason of the Infirmary of our Flesh; God therefore sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful Flesh, and by his Obedience to God's Law, condemned Sin first in his own Flesh: (for in him was no Sin) and also in the Flesh of Believers; that the Righteousness of the Law (by our Union with Christ) might be fulfilled in us (by Imputation) who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit,”

Rom. viii. 1, 2, 3, 4. Christ being a reputed Sinner, and content to be “the Lamb slain from (or before) the foundation of the World;” *Rev. xiii. 8.* Therefore Man's Sin by God's Imputation of it to Christ, condemned Christ to Death: And Christ's Righteousness, by God's Imputation of it to Man, condemned Sin to death in Man, when united to Christ.

“ For Christ became Sin for us who knew no Sin, that we might become the Righteousness of God in him,” *2 Cor. v. 21.* Wherefore God saith, *Deliver him from going down to the Pit, I have found a Ransom, Job xxxiii. 24.* And forasmuch as *without shedding*

Shedding of Blood there is no Remission of Sins, Heb. ix. 22. Therefore God gave Christ for a *Covenant of Peace* to the People, *Isa.* xlii. 7. To be a bloody Sacrifice, to expiate and take away the Guilt of Sin out of the Hearts of his Chosen. For he gave his *Life a Ransom for many*," *Matt.* xx. 28. That they might serve God (by a free will Offering) without (slavish) Fear in Righteousness all the Days of their Life, *Luke* i. 75. For the Promise to the Church is, that they shall know (Christ) the Truth, and the Truth shall make them free: "For if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed," *John* viii. 32, 36. "For Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth," *Rom.* x. 4. Christ and the Believer are one, as the Husband and Wife are one. "My Beloved is mine, and I am his," *Cant.* ii. 16. Therefore, true Believers are become dead to the Law, by the Body of Christ: for Christ in his Body fulfilled all the Demands of the Law for us and in our stead, and also went to *Calvary's* Cross and offered up his holy Body on the Tree, and was made a Curse for us; for it is written, *Cursed is every one that hangeth on a Tree*, *Gal.* iii. 13. There he was bruised for our Iniquities, even for our transgressing his Father's holy Law. "The Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and by his Wounds and Stripes we are healed," *Isa.* liii. 5. "And every believing Soul must look on him whom he hath pierced by his Sins, and mourn for him, as one mourneth in the bitterness of his Soul for his only Son, or first-born," *Zech.* xii. 10. What Soul, when made sensible that Christ the slaughtered Lamb shed his innocent Heart's Blood to save him from the Sea of God's Wrath, the everlasting Burning, can help mourning with Rivers of Tears for his Soul's Beloved one? I cannot forget the Mixture of Joy and

and Grief I experienced when first I ey'd my bleeding God dying on the Cross for me, and the Holy Ghost applying his precious Blood to my wounded Soul, to heal and cleanse me from all Sin, 1 *John* i. 7. "Thus having made Peace by the Blood of his Cross, and reconciled us to God, in the suffering Body of his Flesh, through Death, he does present all his mourning Children (being thus made willing in the Day of his Power) holy, unblameable and unreprouable in his Sight," *Col.* i. 20, 22. Thus do the People of God mourn in *Sion*, viz. in the Church, when they are truly called into the Covenant of Grace; not only for their own Sins, but also for the Sins of others: And God takes Notice of them, and sends the blessed Man, that wonderful Messenger, clothed in fine Linen, with the Writer's Ink-horn by his Side, to set a Mark upon the Foreheads of those *Mourners* that *sigh* and *cry*, *Ezek.* ix. 4. Thus are they sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise (which applies the Blood that issued out of the Side (the mysterious Ink-horn) of the Son of God) even to the Day of Redemption, *Eph.* iv. 30. Now the Believer's Obligation to the Law, as a Covenant of Works, is cancell'd; his Security lies in the new Covenant made with Christ, and his Perseverance is certain, being *kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation*, 1 *Peter* i. 5. For the Believer is *not his own*, but is *bought with a Price*, 1 *Cor.* vi. 19, 20. And *hath no Confidence in the Flesh*, *Phil.* iii. 3. But *his Sufficiency is of God*, 2 *Cor.* iii. 5. And is brought into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God, *Rom.* viii. 21. And freed from the Dominion of Sin: and no marvel, when Christ is King, for he is the King of Saints, as well as the Friend and Advocate for poor penitent Sinners. "Sin shall not reign in the Saints' (in Believers') mortal Bodies; for they are

are not under the Law, but under Grace : and therefore Sin shall not have Dominion over them. What then ? shall we sin because we are not under the Law (not under it's condemnatory Power or Curse) but under Grace ? God forbid," *Rom. vi. 14, 15.* " Thus are Believers become dead to the Law by the Body of Christ, and are married to another, even to him who is raised from the Dead, that they may bring forth Fruit unto God," *Rom. vii. 4.* For God works in his Bride (in Believers) *both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure, Phil. 2. 13.*

Now I beseech you my dear Neighbours, to give me Leave to ask you one Question, *viz.* Whether you are really married to Jesus Christ, or to the Works of the Law ? surely, you must know who you love, and on whom you rely ! If you are wedded to the Law, *i. e.* if you depend on the Law for Salvation, you are wedded to the Curse : For *cursed is every one that continueth not in all Things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them, Gal. iii. 10.* If you have not from your Heart been espoused to *one* Husband (Christ), and presented to him as chaste Virgins, loving him above all, *2 Cor. xi. 2.* you cannot bring forth Fruit unto God. Chaste Virgins do not wed two Husbands ! do not expect to be saved by Works and by Grace ; " for if we are saved by Works, then it is no more of Grace : otherwise, if it be by Grace, then it is no more by Works," *Rom. xi. 6.* Now if *Moses'* Vail is not taken off your Hearts, if you like Slaves are striving to keep the Commandments, as a Condition of Life, and trust partly in your own good Works, and partly on the Merits of Christ, you are become Adulteresses : here you come with your old Garment of Self-righteousness to compleat what is deficient in it

out

out of Christ's new Cloth (his new Covenant-righteousness), but that Cloth he will take away, and make the Rent worse (he'll put you to shame), *Mat. ix. 16.* Yet, this is generally the Way we are taught by unconverted Teachers, but Saint *Paul* instructs us otherwise: "For the Woman is bound to the Law of her Husband so long as he liveth, but if her Husband be dead, she is loosed from the Law of her Husband, and might be married to another Man, without being called an Adulteress," *Rom. vii. 2, 3.* We all by Nature wed the Law, and very few out-live it, to see by Faith it's Burial in the Body of Christ. Some indeed are severely whipped, and grievously chastised by the Law; which, as already observed, is our School-master, to bring us unto Christ; but when Faith comes, we are no longer under a School-master, being dead to our former Husband, and become the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus, *Gal. iii. 23, 24, 25, 26.* Now as every pious Woman according to Reason) would be well off at the Death of a very wicked, inexorable Husband, whom she in her Childhood through Ignorance unfortunately married; especially if she be so fortunate afterwards as to be wedded to a virtuous Man: so should we be well off if Christ would kill in us the Body of Sin, by Faith in his Blood; and free us from the tyrannizing Power of the Law, which on every Transgression (like a bad Husband on the least Offence) doth scourge us, and threaten us with eternal Damnation. There is no Peace until we be buried with Christ in Baptism, through the Power of the Holy Ghost (or *breathing Winds*), and he through his prophetic, priestly and kingly Office brings us to himself, and subdues Sin in us, then we become dead to the condemning Power of the Law, and expect Deliverance by Faith in the

Merits of the Death of Christ, which is rendered effectual by the Operation of the Holy Spirit convincing and alluring our Souls, like the Bride whom he brings up out of the Wilderness of Sin and Unbelief, leaning on her new Beloved. I say, until those Things are done in us and for us, we cannot say we have put off or buried the old Man, our former vexatious Husband, and have put on Christ (who alone is responsible to the Law for his Bride), and by receiving his divine Nature are *created* a-new after the Image of God in Righteousness and true Holiness, *Eph.* iv. 22, 24. Rendered by Grace upright in Heart and sincere, we become as free from the Power of the Law, being thus married to Christ, as a Woman is from conjugal Duties to her buried Husband. Has the Spirit of Christ, my Friends, revealed unto you, that by his priestly Office he has made a full Atonement and Satisfaction to God for all your Sins, by offering up his holy Body as a Free-will Offering for your Souls? And was it ever applied to your Hearts? Did you ever find his atoning Blood, the sovereign Balm, an efficacious Remedy to your afflicted Souls, your wounded Consciences, which the Word of God by his Spirit, as a Heart-searching Prophet, had a little before smitten like a two-edged Sword, "dividing assunder of Soul and Spirit, Joints and Marrow?" *Heb.* iv. 12. For this balmy Blood of Jesus Christ, applied by Faith, will *cleanse us from all Sin*, *1 John* i. 7. And does he as a King daily subdue the Remainder of your Corruptions, so that as the outward Man grows weaker and weaker, the inward Man grows stronger and stronger? *2 Cor.* iv. 16. Many would be *Christians*, but do not care to go through the Operation. If you are thus justified and sanctified, then you are blessed, for you shall walk in the Light of his reconciled Heart-cheering Countenance,

Countenance, *Psal.* lxxxix. 15. " And your Path shall be as the Light, which shines more and more until the perfect Day," *Prov.* iv. 18. Oh! my Brethren, if ever you come under the Dispensation of God's Spirit, and have the Honour to be Prophets, Priests, and Kings unto God, then shall you also learn to say with Saint *John*, *We know that we are of God, and the whole World* (not thus enlightened) *lieth in Wickedness*, 1 *John* v. 19. And unless they repent, and come thus to receive Christ in all his gracious Offices they must perish, for *he that hath the Son, hath Life*; but *he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life*; but *the Wrath of God abideth on him*, 1 *John* v. 12. *John* iii. 36. A dismal State, my fellow Sinners! I hope some of you by this Time, convinced of your Condition, would gladly be numbered amongst the saved, the called of God and sanctified; *unto whom it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God*, *Luke* viii. 10. Though the Devil persecute you, and his deluded scoffing Children were to call you in Derision by the Name of *Methodists*: For we know *all Men have not Faith*, but many continue the Devil's poor deluded Slaves, unto whom the Word of God is spoken in Parables; " that seeing they might see and not perceive, and hearing they might hear and not understand; because the Enemy, whom they serve, taketh away the Word out of their Hearts, lest they should believe and be saved," *Luke* viii. 10, 12. But you, beloved Brethren, who are called by Grace to be Joint-heirs with Christ, remember that Scripture, " To you it is given, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his Name's sake," *Phil.* i. 29. and cheerfully bear the Frowns of the Devil, in the Hearts of the Unconverted, and marvel not, while you are made Kings and Priests unto God, to offer up spiritual

Sacrifices, acceptable to God, through the Mediator Jesus Christ; and are encouraged to "come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, to receive Strength and Help in Time of Need," *Heb. iv. 16.* You are now the blessed Men to whom the Lord will not impute Sin, *Psal. xxxii. 2.* He imputes not Sin to his People, because it is not their chosen Element, but their Place of Bondage; not their Meat but their Poison: and therefore if such Men sin through Inadvertency, who are thus adopted into God's Family, the Apostle tells us, *We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous,* (who is as an high Priest entered within the Vail, with his Blood, even into the Presence of God for us), *and he is the Propitiation for our Sins,* *1 John ii. 1, 2.* Glorious Exchange! once you were Subjects and Bond-slaves to Sin: "for of whomsoever a Person is overcome, of the same is he brought into Bondage," *2 Peter ii. 19.* Once the Things you were forbidden to do, those Things your corrupt Nature inclined you to do; but now Christ by his kingly Power has in a Measure subdued Sin in you: and although through the Remainder of Corruptions, God may suffer a Believer to cry, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death!* yet the Holy Ghost shall enable you as he did Saint Paul, to *thank God through Jesus Christ,* *Rom. vii. 24, 25.* who shall reign and daily subdue Sin in the Hearts of all those who are "translated from the Power of the Devil, which is Darkness, into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, which is marvellous Light; and have found Redemption in his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins," *Col. i. 13, 14.* And shall be *delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God,* *Rom. viii. 21.* Now you are not only mystically, but, in a Measure, experimentally crucified to

to the World, and the World to you. Your chief Glory now is in the Cross of our dear Lord Jesus Christ; which the Sons of Men, not being born of God, hate to bear: these are called natural Men, or Men of the World; when others, who are born of the Spirit, are said to be chosen out of the World, whom the World hateth, *John* xv. 19. And why? because they are chosen out of the World, they conform not with the World! but their *Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*, *1 John* i. 3. And their *Conversation is in Heaven*, *Phil.* iii. 20. And their Work while on Earth is in the Lord's Vineyard, beating up for Volunteers for the King of Glory; endeavouring to become all Things to all Men, that they might gain some, *1 Cor.* ix. 22. For they have followed Christ so long, and love his Service so well, that they are become Fishers of Men, *Matt.* iv. 19. And endeavour by all Means to win Souls to Christ. "They are God's Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, which God has before ordained, that they should walk in them," *Eph.* ii. 12. Therefore you see my beloved Brethren, that God's People, especially his Ministers, are ordained and commanded to "study to shew themselves approved of God. Workmen who need not to be ashamed, having learned rightly to divide the Word of Truth," *2 Tim.* ii. 15. "What shall we then say to these Things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all (all who are born of the Spirit) how shall he not with Christ also freely give us all Things?" He is our Advocate on high. "Who shall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth: (He justifies freely on the sure Foundation of the Death of his Son) Who is he that condemneth? It

It is Christ that died." He laid down his Life for the Sheep; and gives them the Knowledge of the Remission of their Sins, *Rom. viii. 31, 32, 33, 34.* "Wherefore they receive not the Spirit of Bondage again to fear; but receive the Spirit of Adoption, whereby they cry, *Abba, Father.* And the Spirit itself beareth Witness with their Spirits, that they are the Children of God," *Ver. 15, 16.* And because God's People, through Grace, obey the effectual Call, whereby they are Co-workers together with God; *therefore they give all Diligence to make their Calling and Election sure,* 2 Peter i. 10. Which is every Christian's Privilege: and they that will not strive to enter in at the strait Gate, may blame themselves for their own Backwardness, owing to the Fall of *Adam*, in which they all died, 1 *Cor. xvi. 22.* For there is no Unrighteousness with God, therefore *let God be true, but every Man a Liar,* *Rom. iii. 4.* For we have all come short of the Glory of God, and it would be no Injustice in him to condemn us all, for the whole World is become guilty before him, *Rom. iii. 19.* Therefore let us with Joy embrace the free Salvation, which eternal Love prepared for us, and improve the manifold Grace given unto us, whilst it is called To-Day, for Night cometh, when no Man can work, *John iv. 4.* For the Day is with many of us far spent, and Death, which (I am afraid) will be a sorrowful Night (to many a dry-Bone Soul) is at Hand: let us therefore cast away the unfruitful Works of Ignorance (which will be found dismal Darknes) and be clothed with Humility, and indued with the Knowledge of the divine Will, in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding, which will be unto us the Armour of Light, even now in the Time of our mortal Life. Remembering our Privilege, mentioned before; and that it is our Duty and Interest

terest to make our *Calling and Election* sure; i. e. clear to the Satisfaction of our own Conscience, 2 *Peter* i. 10. For altho' there is a sure Foundation laid, yet there are many Sandy-ground Professors, who make Shipwreck of Faith, and fall finally into Condemnation, after they have been enlightened like *Judas* and King *Saul*, and like them that tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, i. e. the inferior Workings of God's Spirit, which always accompanies the Word more or less; yet still it was but a *Taste*, and for want of effectual Conviction and sound Conversion, their Tasting and Receiving of God's new Wine into their old Bottles (unconverted Hearts), did them no good, but burst their Bottles, and so Wine and Bottles perished, *Matt.* ix 17. (Sin grew impatient by Restraint, and broke out with greater Violence). Yet there is an Impossibility on God's Part to suffer his Truth to fail Believers, who have been effectually called according to his Purpose, convinced in their Understanding, convicted in Heart by the Word of Truth, and condemned by the Law, and then Ransomed by Blood, and released by Faith in the Merits of the Son of God; such must be safe, being rescued as a Prey from the Strong, and plucked as a Brand from the Burning by the Hand of Omnipotence; for *if the Son makes us free, we are free indeed*, *John* viii. 36. and especially if we have passed through the *fiery Trial*, 1 *Peter* iv. 12. viz. of Persecution. The Grain that withereth not by scorching Heat will come to Maturity, having *Christ in us the Hope of Glory*, *Col.* i. 27. We go on from one Degree of Grace unto another, until we are arrived to full Assurance of Faith, and sealed with the holy Spirit of Promise, which is an Earnest of our Inheritance in Glory; and it is a sure Evidence that as the Soul

has

has been redeemed from the reigning and condemning Power of Sin and Unbelief, also transplanted from Nature into Grace, so shall the Body one Day obtain Redemption from the Grave, and be re-united to the Soul, and be put safe into the purchased Possession (according to Promise) *Eph. i. 13, 14*. Wherefore the Apostle exhorteth Believers to cease from Sin, yea from corrupt Communication, lest they grieve the Holy Spirit of God, and deprive themselves of his Comforts, who hath sealed them to the Day of Redemption, *Eph. iv. 29, 30*. Thus Christ promises Believers shall hear his Voice, and as Christ knows them, they shall know his Voice, and follow him. "And I give unto them (says Christ) eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hands. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand," *John x. 27, 28, 29*. "For when the Enemy shall come in like a Flood (into the Heart of God's People), then the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a Standard against him," and chase him away, *Isa. lix. 19*. Therefore the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against the Church built upon this Rock, or Christ received by Faith into the Believer's Heart, *Matt. xvi. 18*. But woe be to them that are alone (without Christ), for when they fall, there is none to help them, *Eccle. iv. 10*. Oh! strive therefore to make your Calling and Election sure, then shall you enjoy the Honour contained in these sublime Characters bestowed on God's People, viz. His pleasant Portion, *Jer. xii. 10*. His own Inheritance, *Isa. xix. 25*. His Jewels, which he will one Day collect together, *Mal. iii. 17*. For his peculiar Treasure, *Exod. xix. 5*. The dearly Beloved of God's own Soul, *Jer. xii. 7*. The Apple of his Eye, *Zech. ii. 8*. And Christ says that "whoever

soever offends one of them, it were better that a Mill-stone was hanged about his Neck, and that he was drowned in the Depth of the Sea," *Matt. xviii.* 6. But notwithstanding God's unalterable Love to his People; if they wilfully sin against him, he will give the dearly Beloved of his own Soul (for a Sealon) into the Hands of their Enemies, *Jer. xii.* 7. until he hath sufficiently humbled them; and then will he have Compassion on them, and bring every penitent Soul again into the Light of his Countenance, *Ver.* 15. And in order that God's People might watch, as well as pray; God says, "If my Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments; if they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments: then will I visit their Transgressions with the Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes. Nevertheless, my loving Kindness will I not utterly take from them; nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail (those who are the Objects of his Love, and the Purchase of his Blood), *Psal.* lxxxix. 30, 31, 32, 33. And though God's Blood-bought People are safe in the everlasting Covenant of Grace, which is well-ordered in all Things and sure, *2 Sam.* xxiii. 5. Yet they dare not sin that Grace may abound, lest God's Rod follows them as it did King *David* for his Sin touching *Uriah*, &c. For saith God by the Prophet *Nathan*, *The Sword shall never depart from thine House*, *2 Sam.* xii. 10. A dreadful Sentence! enough to deter God's People, yea, every considerate Soul from wilful Disobedience!

O Heavenly Father, we see the Difficulty of walking in the right Road, being by Nature ignorant of thy Ways, and prone to Disobedience, owing to the Strength of our Corruptions, and Weakness in Grace. May we see the Necessity of thy correcting Hand, when we
F neglect

neglect our Duty, and disobey thy Commands: and considering thy paternal Care over us, be enabled, through Faith, like holy David, to say that thy Rod and Staff shall comfort us all the Days of our Life, Psal. xxiii. 4.



S E C T. III.

The Folly of daubing with untempered Mortar, or mixing Works with Grace. True Faith will believe the Promise, Dip in Jordan, and be clean. Also walk round Jericho, and gain the Conquest. The Disciples forsook their Lord: Christ gained the bloody Victory alone, and gave the Merits of his Life and Death unto them.

BEHOLD! it is absolutely necessary that all poor Sinners and every Believer that thirsteth for Grace to subdue Sin should come to the Waters, viz. the Merits of Christ; and he that is poor in Spirit, and hath no good Works to buy with, let him come to Christ. "Come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy Wine and Milk, without Money and without Price," *Isa. lv. 1.* The Poverty of the Soul excites Pity, and makes the Redeemer cry out, *Oh! thou Afflicted, tossed with Tempest, and not comforted, Isa. liv. 11.* Come to my Banquet, for I have troden the Wine press alone, in my Agony and bloody Sweat, for Wine to chear thy troubled Heart, *Isa. lxiii. 3.* Also suck the Breasts of my Faithfulness for the Milk of Consolation, *Isa. lxvi. 11.*
Then

Then go to the bloody Cross, and eat the Sacrifice of my Body, which was broken there for thee, *I am the Bread of Life*, John vi. 48. Then come to my complete Obedience to the Law for white Raiment, (spotless Righteousness) "that the Shame of thy Nakedness do not appear," *Rev.* iii. 18. "Why do you spend your Money for that which is not Bread, and your Labour for that which satisfieth not (God's Justice, nor appeaseth your Conscience)? hearken Diligently unto me (saith God), and eat ye that which is good, even the Merits of the Body and Blood of Christ by Faith, and let your Souls delight themselves in this Fatness. Incline your Ear, and come unto me: hear, and your Soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure Mercies of *David*," *Isa.* lv. 1, 2, 3. This sure Mercy belongs to every believing justified Soul, that hath been sealed with the Holy Spirit, and God hath confirmed his Faithfulness to his Saints by an Oath, *Once have I sworn by my Holiness, that I will not lie unto David*, *Psal.* lxxxix. 35. And whereas Believers have the *sure Mercies of David* conferred upon them, whom then shall we fear, since *The Lord is our Strength and our Song; and he is become our Salvation*, *Exod.* xv. 2. And that the Believer might not doubt of God's Faithfulness to restore him, when the Devil hath thrust at him that he falls; which is some Times the Case in the Field of Battle, in which he is continually under Arms, for he is a Soldier enlisted under the King of *Sion*, Jesus Christ, and wears his Livery; having no Confidence in the Flesh; but all his Trust is in God. Therefore, God willing more abundantly to shew unto such Heirs of Promise the Immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an Oath, that by two immutable Things (even by Word and Oath, pledged for the Security of the

Heirs of Glory, we may be assured of renewed Grace; nor shall we be suffered to continue barren or unfruitful; the Scripture says,) "In which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge to lay hold upon the Hope set before us; which Hope we have as an Anchor to the Soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entreth into that within the Vail," *Heb. vi. 14, 17, &c.* Our Hope centers in the Merits of the all-atoning Blood of Jesus, who as an Advocate and High-Priest is entered into Heaven, even into the Presence of God, pleading the Merits of his precious Blood for us, *Heb. viii. 1, 2.* And God is thereby just in being the Justifier of them that believe in Jesus, *Rom. iii. 26.* Because God hath received double for all their Sins, by the Merits of the Death of his Son; "Speak ye comfortably (saith God) to *Jerusalem* (the Church militant) and cry unto her, that her Warfare is accomplished, that her Iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's Hand double for all her Sins," *Isa. xl. 2.* The Church, (the whole Family of the Faithful) receives the Merits of Christ by Faith, which Faith is the Gift of God, and then offers up those Merits to God, pleads the Atonement made for her Sins, not mixed in the least with her own good Works, in Point of Justification before God. (Christ is the Pearl of great Price, which we lost in the Fall of *Adam*, and no one should presume to preach until he has found it; and then he would cry aloud, teaching with Authority, as Christ did, and not as the Scribes, *Matt. vii. 29.* Shewing the People that original Sin, as well as actual Transgressions will condemn them. He will be enabled also to declare in the most explicit Manner the divine Plan, the determinate Counsel of God to save lost Sinners through

through the Death and Righteousness of his Son.) We are accounted righteous before God only for the Merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own Works or Deservings. Wherefore that we are justified by Faith only is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of Comfort, as more largely is express'd in the *Homily* of Justification, and in *Article* XIth. : Oh sweet Article! Sound and scriptural Tenet of our Mother Church; how few of the Clergy do feed thy Sons with the sincere Milk of thy precious Doctrine! How often do they mix the imaginary Meetness of Man with the Merits of Christ, in Point of Acceptance with God, and so rob him of the Honour due to his Name. May all you that read the above sacred Lines, the Touchstone of orthodox Teaching, take due Care how you adulterate the unspotted Righteousness and Merits of Christ with a base Mixture of your own (imperfect, deceitful, ragged) Righteousness. For "God will not give his Glory to another, neither his Praise to graven Images," (*viz.* Works performed by you) *Isa.* xlii. 8. *Behold my Servant*, saith God! as much as to say, I have given him for a Covenant to you my People, to fulfil my Law, and (thereby bring in an *everlasting Righteousness* for you, *Dan.* ix. 24.) also to die in your stead, that you might live eternally; and my Soul delighteth in him for so doing, *Isa.* xlii. 1, 6. "Neither can there be Salvation in any other Way; for there is no other Name given under Heaven among Men, but the Name of Jesus Christ, whereby we must be saved," *Act.* iv. 12. Tho' too often set at nought by you Builders, *v. 11.* by mixing your own Doings with his Merits, and thereby daubing your Hope, Faith, and all your Building with untempered Mortar. For you secretly idolize your own good Works, instead of
trusting

trusting wholly to his Righteousness, imagining at least that your good Endeavours will partly entitle you to Salvation. All such fond Hopes, such Wood, Hay and Stubble-Building, God, in his Anger, will consume, and you with it, in the Midst of all your vain Hopes, with the great Hailstones of his Wrath and fiery Indignation, *Ezek. xiii. 13, 14.* God would have you know that Christ only is **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**, *Jer. xxiii. 6.* "Behold! all ye that kindle a Fire, that compass yourselves about with Sparks, (that foster yourselves with false, persecuting Zeal) God bids you walk in the Light of your Fire, and in the Sparks which you have kindled, (feed yourselves with the Hope of being saved by pompous Ceremonies) this shall ye have at my Hands, ye shall lie down (not in Peace, but) in Sorrow," *Isa. l. 11.* "Therefore look unto me all the Ends of the Earth, (saith Christ) and be saved," *Isa. xlv. 22.* Oh! how does Jesus Christ love to hear poor Sinners plead in Faith the Merits of his Sufferings at the Throne of Grace: and how acceptable are their Persons and Performances in Christ, in whom the Father is for ever well pleased. When his Merits are pleaded before the Throne in Faith, Christ, who is the Angel of the Covenant, putteth much incense into the Prayers of such Supplicants; and offers them up acceptably upon the golden Altar (of his personal Merit and Holiness) which is before the Throne, *Rev. viii. 3.* The Apostle saith, "We have an Altar (a Type of Christ on the Cross) whereof Unbelievers have no Rigth to eat," *Heb. xiii. 10.* Our glorious Redeemer condescended to be a Priest, Altar, and Sacrifice for the Benefit of the Faithful: unto whom the Lord will reveal his Secrets, and shew them his Covenant, *Psal. xxv. 14.* Oh! may **THE LORD OUR**

OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, and great High-priest, cause the Smoak of his Incense, perfumed with the Odours of his Merits, to enliven our lukewarm Prayers ; and through the Efficacy of his atoning Blood, may we find Reception with God : And may he take the golden Censer, and fill it full of the holy Fire from the Altar of God, and pour it down into our earthly Hearts ; that we may become the Sons of Thunder to awaken the Dead, and shining Lights to direct those that are blind : and may we likewise be Instruments in the Lord's Hands to turn many from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God : that they may be enlightened to see the Misery of Man by Nature, and the Necessity of being born again, (notwithstanding his specious Morality) " that Man is from the Crown of his Head to the Sole of his Foot, full of Wounds, Bruises, and putrifying Sores ; that never have been closed, neither bound up, nor mollified with Ointment," in short, extremely miserable, destitute of all Good, *Isa.* i. 6. O may Thousands among us be enlightened to see themselves all over spread with the Leprosy of Sin, and shut without the Camp, having not been cleansed by the only Remedy, the Blood of the Lamb, *Rev.* i. 5. And consequently have no spiritual Communion with Believers, who are sanctified by Grace, having never received the Forgiveness of their Sins. May they cry out like the poor broken-hearted Publican, *Lord, be merciful to me a Sinner*, *Luke* xviii. 13. When they see themselves all over leprous, they, like *Naaman*, will be glad to be healed, and would hearken to the weakest Instrument under God for proper Advice, in order to be made whole, as that great Man attended to the Words of the little captive Damsel of *Israel* : and like him would obey the Voice of the *Hebrew Maid*,
 who

who bid him repair to the Prophet in *Israel*. "Would to God (says she) my Lord was with the Prophet that is in *Samaria*, for he would recover him of his Leprosy," 2 *Kings* v. 3. But let them not consult with Flesh and Blood, *Gal.* i. 16. Nor with carnal Reason or earthly Grandeur. Let them not go to the King of *Israel* with their Presents, *ver.* 5. nor to the great and Worldly-wise, for they will abhor meddling in such Matters, like the King of *Israel*, who rent his Clothes, saying, *Am I a God to kill or make alive?* Here the King being unacquainted with the Power of God, and the Efficacy of Faith, thought there was no such Cure to be done in *Israel*, *ver.* 7. But you see, God is pleased to hide those Mysteries from the Great, the Wise and Prudent, worldly-minded Men, and reveals them unto Babes, even so Father, (says Christ) for so it seemeth good in thy Sight, *Matt.* xi. 25, 26. Would to God that all our rising Generation, that are led captive by their Sins, might have the same experimental Belief of the Power of God in their Souls, as the little captive Daughter of *Israel* had. O! how sweet would their Words be seasoned with Salt, and consequently minister Grace, as did the Words of this believing Maid, unto their Hearers. But to return, what said the Prophet to the astonished King of *Israel*? "Wherefore (said he) hast thou rent thy Clothes? Let *Naaman* come now to me, and he shall know that there is a Prophet in *Israel*. So *Naaman* came with his Horses and Chariot, and stood at the Door of the House of *Elisba*, (and thought to have no small Honour paid him, as proud wealthy Men expect in our Days) But *Elisba* only sent a Messenger unto him, saying, Go, and wash in Jordan seven Times, and thy Flesh shall come again unto thee, and thou shalt be clean. But *Naaman* was wroth, and went away,

away displeased, saying, Behold! I thought, he would surely come out unto me, and stand, and call on the Name of the Lord his God, and strike his Hand over the Place, and recover the Leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, Rivers of Damascus, better than all the Waters of Israel? may I not wash in them and be clean? So he went on his Journey in a Rage. But his Servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My Father, if the Prophet had bid thee do some great Thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith unto thee, Wash, and be clean? Then went he down, and dipped himself seven Times in Jordan, according to the saying of the Man of God; and his Flesh came again like the Flesh of a little Child, and he was clean," *2 Kings* v. 8—14. Are there not too many proud *Naamans* among us, who will not come near the People of God, nor hearken to their Advice? when they might come to the Waters of *Israel*, to wash and be clean; as some in this Town have already experienced, and with Joy do daily declare it. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come to the Waters, and he that hath no Money (no Worthiness) come ye, buy Wine and Milk, without Money, and without Price," *Isa.* lv. 1. Oh! my dear Neighbours, there have been too many raging *Naamans*, turning their Backs upon the Word, and so rejecting the Counsel of God, and will not come near religious Assemblies, and Christian Societies; though God hath promised "wheresoever two or three are gathered together in his Name, that he will grant their Request," *Matt.* xviii. 20. Especially when they offer unto God their Free-will Offerings of Thanks and Praises, when others are idle Loiterers about the Streets, or what is worse, Cursing, Swearing and Tippling in Ale-houses, before and after

Divine Service, (If I may so call it) though too little of the Power of Divinity is often there, as we may see by the Effect in *Gillingham*: and no Wonder, when the Watchman, instead of endeavouring to convert Sinners from the Error of their Ways, studies to ridicule the Godly, and teach their Auditors to do the same, by stigmatizing them with the opprobrious Name of *Enthusiasts* or *Methodists*, which is the cant Name given to all converted Souls, that begin to walk religiously in the Fear of God. It is horrible to tell, and sorrowful to see, in a Protestant Country, he that dares to own Christ openly, is by some Jew-hearted, Pope-headed Ministers judged fit to be cast out of the Synagogue, *John xxii. 34.* But Believers do know those sort of Ministers are Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God, *2 Tim. iii. 4.* Having only the *Form* of Godliness, but deny the *Power*, (having never felt it) from such lifeless, erroneous Teachers we ought to turn away our Ear, *2 Tim. iii. 5.* Those letter-learned, proud-boasting, goat-feeding Teachers do by ridiculing the Godly, together with their worldly Conversation mixed with Scoffing (with Grief I speak it) confirm proud *Naamans* in their Ignorance and Blindness, which will prove a Curse to them at last, for *Cursed is he that maketh the Blind to wander out of the Way,* *Deut. xxvii. 18.* It was said of the *Pharisees*, they neither go in to the Kingdom of Heaven themselves, nor suffer them that are entering to go in, *Matt. xxiii. 13.* which is truly the very Case in our Days. And therefore proud *Naamans* do continue in Rage to cry out saying, Are not the Doctrines of our Churches better than the Doctrines of the Methodists? may we not go there, wash and be clean? But, *Query*, Where does God bestow his Blessings? My dear Neighbours, I
declare

declare before God that I pay a great Respect to the fundamental Doctrines of the Church of *England*, as by Law established, perhaps beyond most of you, for in the Doctrine contained in the Seventeenth Article of the Church of *England*, which is the Bulwark and Defence of the Church, I place my whole Consolation. The Doctrines of the Church of *England* are like an Apothecary's Shop, having all Sort of Ingredients for salutary Ends, fit for Exhortation, Reproof, and Admonition, cutting and healing, killing and curing. But if an unskilful, unexperienced Physician, injudiciously administers those Ingredients, the Patient might be killed instead of cured : " For a natural Man discerneth not, nor receiveth the Things of the Spirit of God (though learned in the Letter) for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all Things, even the deep Things of God ; although he himself is judged of no (unconverted) Man," 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. Therefore, an Unbeliever, that hath not been justified by Faith, and tasted the Sweets of Forgiveness of Sins, that pleads there is no such Thing attainable in this Life ! such, I say, can have no Fellowship with gracious Souls, no more than Darkness have with Light, 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. And now thou proud *Naaman*, behold and hearken diligently, if the Doctrines of our Church, or the Waters of *Israel*, God's Word, flow out, cleanse and sanctify a peculiar People to God, who by Virtue of the Power, Operation, and inward Teaching of God's Spirit preach and pray extempore, he or they being skilled in the Word of Righteousness, will advise thee, as the Man of God did *Naaman*, to wash seven Times in *Jordan*, composed of the seven (the manifold) Streams of Christ's Blood,

which flowed out for thy Recovery : for as Christ shed his precious Blood seven Times, or from seven different Parts of his holy Body for Man's Salvation, viz. by Circumcision, Scourging, Crowning with Thorns, the Spear in his Side, Nails in his two Hands, and the Nail in his Feet ; and each Stream being mysterious and meritorious, being the Blood of Immanuel, and the indenting and sealing Blood of the Covenant, it becometh us to think and speak respectfully thereof ; and as Christ commanded his Disciples to gather up the Fragments of natural Bread, that nothing might be lost, *John* vi. 12. Doubtless we ought to have an Eye to all the Sufferings of Christ, which is the Soul's Bread of Life ; and with great Humility and Thankfulness wash seven Times, that is, frequently and effectually, in this blessed *Jordan*, that we may be clean : For the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth the penitent Sinner from all Sin, 1 *John* i. 7. Thus, we see (blessed be God) Unbelievers become Believers, and being made Priests and Kings unto God, *Rev.* i. 6. can by Faith carry Christ, the Ark of the Covenant, *Isa.* lxii. 6. seven Times, &c. round the Walls of *Jericho* (viz. the Devil's Kingdom) and blow through weak Rams Horns in mighty Prayer and Supplication, 'till the Walls of *Jericho* (or Satan's strong Holds) fall down, *Joshua* vi. 20. and 2 *Cor.* x. 4. But if God's Word, or the Waters of *Israel*, or Doctrines of the Church of *England* are not made Use of in *Israel's* ground, but carried into a strange Land, and used by one whose Heart and Nature was never changed, who never prevailed with God in mighty Prayer, (as *Jacob* did when he obtained his new Name *Israel*, and received Power from God, *Gen.* xxxii. 28.) Neither knows the Joys of the new birth, nor can say, *I remember the Love of my Espousals*, *Can.* iii. 2. *Jer.* ii. 2.

ii. 2. Being never married to Christ, that he might bring forth Fruit unto God, *Rom. vii. 4.* And was never sent, nor effectually called by the Lord to work in his Vineyard, *Matt. xx. 1.* But ran for the sake of *filthy Lucre*, *1 Peter v. 2.* although God never sent him, *Jer. xxiii. 21.* I say, if this is the Case, (which is too often, the more the Pity) then thou mightest dip or wash here, but thou wilt never be likely under such a *blind Guide*, to find the Consolation of *Israel*, neither will thy Leprosy depart from thee, unless the Almighty in a miraculous Manner turns Preacher to thy Soul, so long as thou livest. Therefore I exhort thee to *prove all Things, and hold fast that which is good*, *1 Thes. v. 21.* For the Doctrines of the Church of *England* are often preached better out of the Church Walls by faithful Laymen, than within the Walls by unenlightened Clergy, who are *Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God*, *2 Tim. iii. 4.* Therefore thou must come among God's *Israel*, who have obtained the Blessing, *Gen. xxxii. 29:* Who are *Israelites* indeed, in whom there is no allowed Sin, *John i. 47.* For "he that keeps Company with wise Men, shall be wise; but the Companion of Fools shall be destroyed," *Prov. xiii. 20.* But God's *Israel* shall be saved with an everlasting Salvation, *Isa. xlv. 17.* Such who are spoken of by Christ, *viz.* "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white Stone, and in the Stone a new Name written, which no Man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it," *Rev. ii. 17.* They are included in that "great Multitude which no Man could number, who had washed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb, having come out of great Tribulation," great Hatred of the World, &c. and why should I and my Fellow-pilgrims expect otherwise than to suffer Reproach,

Reproach, while we follow the Lamb here below, *Rev. vii. 14.* It is enough if we bear that honourable Appellation, viz. "Holy Brethren, Partakers of the heavenly Calling, Fellow-citizens of Heaven, and Joint-heirs with Christ," *Rom. viii. 17.* And we desire to continue with one Consent to direct all Lepers to the cleansing Streams. Come away then my Fellow sinners, and beloved Neighbours, to the balmy River of this spiritual *Jordan*, which runs through the Land of *Israel*: (Believers Hearts) And this balmy Blood of Christ, the Fountain of Happiness, shall also wash away your Leprosy, as I trust thro' Mercy it hath washed away mine for ever. This is the Fountain, even the Blood of Jesus, that was opened for the House of *Israel*, for all Believers to wash and be clean, *Zech. xiii. 1.* In the Day when God smote him for our Sins on the Cross; according as it was fore-spoken by the Prophet, "Awake, O Sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts, smite the Shepherd, and the Sheep shall be scattered," *ver. 7.* (where observe the Sheep are sometimes scattered): God for wise Ends hides his Face, for a Season, from his own dear (Blood-bought) People, to shew them their Weakness, that they might not think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, *Rom. xii. 3.* And in order to make them meet to receive more Grace: "For he that humbleth himself, or is humbled under the mighty Hand of God, shall in due Time be exalted," *Luke xiv. 11.* God by this Means emptied the Disciples of Self-sufficiency and spiritual Pride: for they all in a cowardly manner forsook him and shamefully fled, *Mark xiv. 50.* leaving their Lord and Master, the Captain of their Salvation in the Field of Battle by himself, to combat with all his Enemies, who scourged him (by

(by God's Appointment, for as he gave himself a Sacrifice for Sin, God laid upon him all the Iniquity of his Bride) and they clothed him with Purple (which our Sins had dyed) and platted a Crown of Thorns, which our Sins had occasioned, and put it on his Head: which Crown of Thorns, of Sorrow and Pain, the just Desert of our Sins, he bore for us. He wore our purple Robe of Disobedience, that we might wear his white unspotted Robe of Innocency: He wore our shameful thorny Crown of Sin, that we might be entitled to a glorious Crown of Righteousness, 2 *Tim.* iv. 8. They smote Christ on the Head, and spat in his Face, which Blows still bruise the Serpent's Head, and when Christ appears in Glory, that Reproach and Spitting will cover his Enemies with Shame to all Eternity. By that Spittle also which was a Shame that Christ should receive, the Church's Eyes (his Bride's) like the blind Man's, are anointed, and opened to see clearly that by her Husband's Stripes she is healed of all the Bruises of Sin. They mocked him too before Men, by the Instigation of the Devil, and set him at nought, that we might without Shame appear with Boldness before God. Then they led him without the Gates of the City of the old *Jerusalem*, and lifted him up before an Assembly of wicked Men, in that Hour and Power of Darkness where the grand Adversary the Devil was President, and murder'd him there: but they could have no Power against him, had it not been given from above: therefore the Bride reaps the Benefit, knowing that the Just died for the Unjust, and she shall appear with Joy in the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, and shall lift up her Head comfortably before God the Judge of all, in the holy City, within the Gates of the new *Jerusalem* above for ever. Thus the slaughter'd
Lamb

Lamb died in our stead, a shameful Death, that we might live a glorious Life eternal, *Mark* xv. 15, 17, 19, 20, 21. *Matt.* xxvi. 67. *Isa.* liii. 5. Come hither my fellow Sinners, and let us behold our suffering Redeemer bleeding to Death on the Cross for our Sins, to quench the Wrath of an angry God. And hear Divine Justice consequently proclaim, *My Wrath is appeased.* View this glorious Christ that came to deliver his Church out of their temporal and spiritual Distresses: Behold him in his Power as well as in his Goodness, and hear the grand enquiry, "Who is this that cometh from *Edom*, with died Garments from *Bozra*? This Person that is so glorious in his Apparel, travelling in the Greatness of his Strength? 'Tis I, saith Christ, that speak in Righteousness, mighty to save, even to save lost Souls. Alas! wherefore art thou red in thine Apparel, and thy Garments like him that treadeth in the Wine-fat? and thy Vesture dipt in Blood? I have troden the Wine Press (of God's Wrath) alone, and of the People (even of the Disciples) there was none with me;" for they all forsook me and fled. And I will tread down the Works of the Devil, which is in the Hearts of my People in mine Anger, and crample them in my Fury, and their Blood shall stain all my Raiment; If Christ bled literally, they shall bleed mystically: Christ's Death was a Death unto Sin, and a new Birth unto Righteousness; so that Christ's Day of Vengeance is the Day of the Church's Peace; and his Blood-staining is her Blood-cleansing Day. The Day of Vengeance, saith he, is in my Heart, (and has been from Eternity) and now the Year of my Redeemed is come, the glorious Day of Deliverance to *Israel* out of Captivity, and especially to deliver the Christian Church from the Slavery of the Devil and Sin. "And I looked, and there was none to help;

help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold (or assist me a little) therefore my own Arm brought forth Salvation" (for my Bride) and my Fury against Sin upheld me in prosecuting this glorious Victory. And I will always tread down the Spirit of Opposition in the ungodly People, in mine Anger (who would not that I should reign over them) and make them drunk with their own Folly in my Fury, and I will bring down their Strength to the Earth, when I arise from the Dead, *Isa.* lxiii. 1, &c. *Rev.* xix. 13. *Luke* xix. 27. Here Christ is a Man of War, as is represented also by his casting *Pharaoh's* Chariots and his Host into the Sea, *Exod.* xv. 3, 4. And all impenitent Sinners shall be drowned in the 'Sea of Hell Fire. Here we might view the fierce Wrath of an offended God, and his burning Anger against Sin, when nothing but the Death of his dear and well-beloved Son, in whom his Soul always delighted could expiate and make an Atonement for the same. No doubt but his fiery Indignation will devour his Adversaries, *i. e.* all impenitent Sinners, *For our God is a consuming Fire*, *Heb.* xii. 29. O Lord my God, if thy Sword of Itern Justice, did execute this bloody Act on thy dear Child, a green Tree, which always budded, blossom'd and brought forth pleasant Fruit, What shall be done to the dry (Bone) Tree? *Luke* xxiii. 31. Unless rooted in Christ, the Answer is plain, *viz.* That without an Interest in thy meritorious redeeming Blood, and clothed with the Wedding Garment of thy Righteousness, the Soul must perish in the second Death. But blessed be God who hath redeemed his Church by that Christ who prayed, not only for his faint-hearted Disciples, (who forsook him in the Hour of Danger) but for as many as should believe in him through their Word, *John* xvii. 20. And a-

H

mong

mong those last mentioned was comprehended, I trust, unworthy me, (thro' glorious Grace) weak as I am, and prone to turn my Back in the Day of Battle. But God has promised "that all Things shall work together for good unto them that love God, even to them who are the Called according to his Purpose," *Rom. viii. 28.* For by that Timidity and Inconstancy of theirs, God humbled the raw Warriors, his Disciples, to the Dust, and prepared them against the Day of Pentecost, when they received Power from Heaven, which their Captain gain'd for them when by Death he conquered him that had the Power of Death, even the Devil: and it came like a rushing, mighty, breathing Wind, and filled their Souls with God! *Act. ii. 1, 2, 4.* And from thenceforth they became great and successful Warriors, like their heavenly Master. And the same *Peter* who was baffled by a Damsel when he denied his Lord, *Luke xxii. 55, 56.* being now filled with the Holy Ghost, not only restored a lame Beggar to leap and praise God, but boldly confessed Christ before the grand Sanhedrim at *Jerusalem*, and told them as follows; "Ye Rulers of the People, and Elders of *Israel*, be it known unto you all, that by the Name of Jesus Christ of *Nazareth*, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this Man stand here before you whole. This is the Stone which was set at nought by you Builders, which is become the Head of the Corner: neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men whereby we must be saved," *Act. iii. 2, 7, 8.* Also see *Act. iv. 8, 10, 11, 12.* Fear not therefore you weak Believers the Faithfulness of your well contriving Father, for they whom he loveth he chasteneth; he exerciseth you every Day, and makes you
first

first little Warriors, he feeds you first with Milk, and after that with strong Meat, 1 Cor. iii. 2. And when you have past your Day of Pentecost, *i. e.* when you are sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise, unto the Day of Redemption, which I believe the Heirs of Glory have sooner or latter a sealing Day before they die, *Eph.* iv. 30. Then you shall become in a Measure like your Captain, Christ, *viz.* expert in War, every Man with his Sword (of the Holy Spirit) on his Thigh, and in his Heart, because of the Fear in the Night, or falling into Sin, *Cant.* iii. 8. For some Times God permits the Devil to sift the Church for wise Ends, to bring about some gracious Purposes, and to shew the Church her Weakness without Christ; and this is called *Satan's Hour, and the Power of Darknes*, *Luke* xxii. 53. But forasmuch as she hath waited for Christ her Salvation, altho' a Troop from the wicked One might seem to overcome her, yet, like *Gad*, she shall overcome at the last, *Gen.* xlix. 18, 19. God will remember them that fear and think on his Name: the Sun of Righteousness shall arise on their Souls, with healing in his Wings, and they shall grow up in Grace, as a fatted Calf of the Stall: and by Faith shall be able to tread down the wicked One and his Troops, like Ashes, under the Soles of their Feet, *Mal.* iv. 2, 3. And she being clothed in Christ's Armour, might well appear like the Morning Star, "fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun, and terrible as an Army with Banners," *Cant.* vi. 10. Now when the Enemy comes into the Field of Battle, *i. e.* attacks the Soul by a strong Torrent or Flood of Temptations, "the Spirit of the Lord lifteth up a Standard against him," *Isa.* lix. 19. But "woe to him that is alone (*viz.* without Christ) for when he falls, there is none to help him," *Eccles.* iv. 10. By the

dreadful Downfal of him that is alone, Christ's Bride may discern her unparalleled Happinefs by being wedded to Chrift, 2 *Cor.* xi. 2. She is now fo near a Kin to God the Father as to be ftyled by the Holy Ghoft *The King's Daughter, who is all glorious within*, becaufe Chrift dwells in her Heart, the Hope of Glory, and her Clothing is of wrought Gold, compleat Redemption, *Pfal.* xlv. 13. The Holy Ghoft ftyleth it *wrought Gold*, on account of the ineflimable Worth of it, for it was designed from Eternity, and actually begun by Chrift her Husband the Moment he defcended from Heaven, and became the holy Seed, which produced the holy Body that was born of the Virgin *Mary*; and altho' he was God, and wrought upon it every Day of his Life, yet it was not compleated until the Moment he cryed out *It is finifhed, and bowed his Head, and gave up the Ghoft*, *John* xix. 30. And this ineflimable Gold-wrought Robe of Righteoufnefs, Chrift the Maker and Owner thereof gives on the Wedding-day unto the Bride, (every Soul whom he espoules) as appears by what follows: for faith he, "I will betroth, *i. e.* marry thee to me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in Righteoufnefs, and in Judgment, and in Loving-kindnefs, and in Mercies: and I will even betroth thee unto me in Faithfulnefs, and thou fhalt know the Lord," *Hof.* ii. 19, 20. Now thou wilt fay, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my Soul fhall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation, he hath covered me with a Robe of Righteoufnefs as a Bridegroom decketh himfelf with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth herfelf with her Jewels," *Ifa.* lxi. 10. As Chrift the Bridegroom decketh himfelf with the ornamental Righteoufnefs of the Law, having fulfilled it, and made it honourable, and then imputes
this

this ornamental Righteousness to his Bride, *Rom.* iv. 6, 11. so she receives it by Faith, and is thereby justified before God; and thus she adorneth herself with every inestimable Jewel, which God has annexed to his Inheritance, and promised to the Man who always keeps and never breaks his Law, which is every precious Promise of Reward which God has given in all the Scriptures to his Church, and includes more than can be expressed, even "such as Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive the Things God has prepared and laid up for his Son's Bride, who loveth him," *1 Cor.* ii. 9. And this will appear to be abundantly confirmed when we consider God's Love to her from Eternity: that she was *chosen* in Christ before the Foundation of the World; that for the Purpose of Salvation the World was created, and the Means of Grace given, that she should be holy and without Blame before him in Love, *Eph.* i. 4. Having saved us, and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our own good Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace which was given us in Christ before the World began, *2 Tim.* i. 9. Thus saith the Scripture, speaking in the prophetic Style, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me (the Church) saying, I have loved thee with an everlasting Love, (*i. e.* from everlasting,) therefore with Loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Again, "I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O Virgin of *Israel* (O Bride of God) for thy Maker is thine Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his Name: thou shalt be adorned again with thy Tabrets, and shalt go forth in the Dances of them that make merry," *Jer.* xxxi. 3, 4. *Isa.* liv. 5. *viz.* with those who praise the Lord with joyful Lips, *Psal.* lxiii. 5. And being adorned with Christ's Righteousness, thou shalt dance with

with Joy in the Holy Ghost, like *David* before the Ark of God, 2 *Sam.* vi. 2, 14. And as *David* had Reason to rejoice in having the Ark of God in Possession, being a Type of Christ, who is the Fountain of all Blessings; it being the Ark of the Covenant between God and his Church under the Law, wherein was kept the two Tables, containing the ten Commandments, the golden Pot with Manna, and *Aaron's* Rod that budded, *Heb.* ix. 4. So the Believer hath Reason to rejoice in Christ, who is the true Ark of the Covenant given by God to the People (his Church) *Isa.* xlii. 6. under the Gospel, who kept entire in himself the ten Commandments, in the Believer's (his Bride's) behalf, without breaking one Jot or Title of them. And in him is the true golden Pot of hidden Manna, viz. his loving Heart; his Favour, better than Life itself; which he giveth to him that overcometh; and all the Branches of the Root of *Jesse*, the Offspring of *David*, when kept safe in Christ, the true Ark, bud and blossom like *Aaron's* Rod: for he that abideth in me, saith Christ, the same beareth much Fruit. But until this glorious Root and Offspring of *David*, this bright and Morning Star arise in our Hearts, we continue dead and fruitless, and can do nothing, *John* xv. 5. But blessed be God who designed him from Eternity, to be the Day-star and the Sun of Righteousness, to arise and give Light within the Heart of every one of his that cometh into the World, namely, the new World of Grace; and when he riseth in the Soul, there is Healing in his Wings, *Mal.* iv. 2. God from Eternity, for the Bride's sake, decreed the Death of his Son, to ransom her from the Power of Sin, the Sting of Death and the Bands of the Devil: for he was the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World, *Rev.* xiii. 8. By Virtue of a
Covenant

Covenant made between God and Christ before Satan made War in Heaven, or rebelled against God, *Rev.* xii. 7. "The Lord possessed me, (saith Christ) in the Beginning of his Way, before his Works of old. I was set up from Everlasting, from the Beginning or ever the Earth was. When he prepared the Heavens, I was there: rejoicing always before him: rejoicing in the habitable Part of his Earth, and my Delights were with the Sons of Men," *Prov.* viii. 22, 23, 27, 30, 31. Thus we find Christ had undertook to be the Surety of his Bride, before the Earth or Heavens were made, and delighted himself with the Thoughts of being by and by, in the Fulness of Time with the Sons of Men, not yet created: consequently we hear of the Formation of the World, of Man's Creation, of his Fall, and the Promise of Christ, the *Seed of the Woman*, that should bruise the *Serpent's Head*, *Gen.* iii. 15. And we find that God was pleased in his great Mercy to promise Christ to *Adam* the Evening of the same Day wherein he fell. For God came to our Parents after the Fall, in the *Cool* of the Day, to convince them of their Error, which is often his Way of dealing with his People: he does not always convince or reprove immediately after the Committing of Sin, as we may observe with Regard to *David's* Sin, reprehended by *Nathan*, *2 Sam.* xii. 13. And after God's gracious Promise to *Adam*, all the Ordinances given by God for the Edification of the Church under the *Mosaick* Dispensation, were Types of Christ, and Shadows of heavenly Things to come; and not the very Image of the Things (or Sacrifice of Christ) *Heb.* x. 1. for the Law made nothing perfect, but was calculated to typify a better Covenant, *Heb.* vii. 19. Therefore when Christ, who was given for a Covenant to the People, cometh into the World, he
saith,

saith, "Sacrifice and Offering thou wouldest not, but a Body hast thou prepared me. In Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices for Sin thou hast no Pleasure. Then said I, Lo ! I come, (in the Volume of the Book it is written of me) to do thy Will, O God," *Heb. x. 5, 6, 7.* Now God takes away the Shadow to establish (Christ) the Substance ; and when he had done the Will of God in fulfilling the Law, by his active Obedience in the Church's stead ; then it being the determinate Counsel of God that he should die for the Sins of his Bride : divine Justice proclaims, "Awake, O Sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts, smite the Shepherd, and the Sheep shall be scattered," *Zech. xiii. 7.* All which was performed when Christ was crucified. His Disciples fled, and he was arraigned and condemned to the Cross : then one of the Soldiers with his Spear pierced his Side, and forthwith came thereout Blood and Water, *John xix. 34, 35.* Now the Fountain was opened according to the Promise, "In that Day there shall be a Fountain opened to the House of David, and to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, viz. the Church militant, for Sin and for uncleanness," *Zech. xiii. 1.* It shall be opened in the Side of the Man that is my Fellow, saith God, the Man that hath struck Hands, or entered Surety, I'll smite him, the Shepherd, for the Sins of the Sheep, and I'll open a Fountain to wash them clean : thus, died Christ, to justify and sanctify his Bride. "For the Blood of Jesus Christ (and his only by Faith) cleanseth from all Sin," *1 John i. 7.* "Known unto God are all his Works from the Foundation," *Acts xv. 18.* And Christ "saw of the Travel of his Soul, and was satisfied," *Isa. liii. 11.* viz. satisfied to lay down his Life, forasmuch as the Sheep should be thereby gathered into

into his Fold, and live for ever! "My Sheep shall hear my Voice, (saith Christ) and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish," *John* x. 28. Again, he saith, "surely they are my People, Children that will not delight in Lying nor Slandering: so he was their Saviour. In all their Afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of God's Presence (which was Christ) saved them: in his Love and in his Pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them (in his Heart) all the Days of old. And did lead his Church through the Deep (the Red Sea) as on dry Ground, to make himself a glorious Name," *Isa.* lxiii. 8, 9, 13, 14. And he drowned all their Enemies, the *Egyptians*, who maliciously followed them, there was not so much as one of them left; but all *Israel* on firm Ground, shouting the triumphant Song, *Exod.* xiv. 28.

GRANT us, O Lord, an humble Heart, to dip in the cleansing Rivers of spiritual Jordan, viz. in the precious Blood of a suffering Emmanuel. And as Simeon saw his Salvation sure, having Christ in his Heart, as well as in his Arms. May all Believers, being made Priests unto God, take up Christ, the Ark of the new Covenant under the Gospel, and through the Merits of the seven Streams of his precious Blood, walk round spiritual Jericho by Faith, until Satan's strong Holds within us fall down.





S E C T. IV.

God's peculiar Care of his Church, and his fiery Indignation on her Enemies. The Church ardently wishes to live to God's Glory.

OUR blessed Redeemer having rescued his Church out of the Hands of her temporal Enemies, and drowned the *Egyptians* in the Red Sea, is certainly a glorious Type of the spiritual Deliverance of the Church, by the Blood of Christ, to be seen by the Eye of Faith in all Believers, who are come from the *Egyptian* Bondage of Sin, and have travelled through the Wilderness, and Horror of Conviction; apprehensive they could not escape for their Life by the Way of the ten Commandments, high as *Baal-zephon's* Mount, &c. and broad as the Sea, and the Terrors of Hell behind, when they saw the Lord their Salvation a present Help in Time of Trouble. In such Streights was the Church, or God's *Israel* of old, they saw they could not pass over the Red Sea, and if they went back, there were all their Enemies, Sword in Hand ready to slay them; so that they were sore afraid: Thus it is with a Sinner who has seen the Law so exceeding broad, cursing every one that continueth not in all Things written in the Book of the Law to do them, *Gal. iii. 10.* and if he goes back to his Sins, then he falls into the Hands of the Devil, and all his spiritual Enemies, who war against the Soul as with Swords and Spears: especially he becomes the Object of all the Curses of God, denounced upon Mount *Ebal*, which make him sore afraid,

afraid, *Deut.* xxvii. 4. Thus is the repenting Sinner in the utmost Distress, when he has been so long under that severe School-master (the Law) that he absolutely despairs of the Benefit of Salvation by his utmost Obedience thereunto. "For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all," *James* ii. 10. "Therefore by the Deeds of the Law, there shall no Flesh be justified," *Rom.* iii. 20. "For the Law made nothing perfect," *Heb.* vii. 19. but obliged us to look for a better Covenant, which we have in Christ, the only Mediator, *Heb.* viii. 6. Therefore is the doubting Sinner continually flying forward and backward in his Imaginations, like *Noah's* Dove over the troubled Waters of God's Displeasure, and can find no Rest for the Sole of his Foot, until he comes to Christ, the true Gospel-Ark, *Gen.* viii. 9. Until then, I say, he feels the Pangs of the New-birth, and wanteth Strength to bring forth, *Isa.* lxvi. 9. He is in Sorrow as a Woman in Travail, *John* xvi. 21. and like sinking *Peter* cries out, *Lord! save, or I perish*, *Matth.* xiv. 30. Thus we may observe, when *Israel* cried unto the Lord in their Distress, *Moses* bid them "stand still, and see the Salvation of God: The *Egyptians*, said he, whom you have seen to-day, you shall see them no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your Peace. Then *Moses* made Intercession with God (doubtless with Groanings which could not be uttered, *Rom.* viii. 26.) And the Lord said unto *Moses*, Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the Children of *Israel* that they go forward. But lift thou up thy Rod, and stretch out thine Hand over the Sea, and divide it: and the Children of *Israel* shall go on dry Ground through the midst of the Sea. (For Man's Extremity is God's Opportunity) And they were

all safely led through the Red-Sea, (and that too in Faith, by which they became all baptized, as *Saint Paul* saith, 1 *Cor.* x. 2.) when they saw the Salvation of God, (*viz.* their great Deliverance). And the Waters were a Wall unto them on the right Hand and on the left. And the *Egyptians* pursued, and went in after them into the midst of the Sea. And the Waters returned, and covered all the Host of *Pharaoh*, that were in Pursuit after them, there remained not so much as one of them, (as noted already). And *Israel* saw the *Egyptians* dead upon the Sea-shore. And *Israel* saw the great Work which the Lord did upon the *Egyptians*; and the People feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his Servant *Moses*," *Exod.* xiv. 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 28. So when the Soul, conscious of Guilt, is apprehensive of falling a Prey to that frightful Enemy, the great red Dragon, more terrible than *Pharaoh* and his Host, following him with all the Curses of God's Law, which appear as so many glittering Weapons formed for his Destruction: then the Cry is, *I am undone, I have destroyed my poor Soul for ever!* (For when Sin reviveth the Sinner dieth, *Rom.* vii. 9. For having made God his Enemy, by the first Revolt in *Adam*, and his own actual Sinning, he finds God's wrathful Displeasure and fiery Indignation burning within him, whereby Sin appears exceeding sinful. And the trembling Sinner convinced of the absolute want of a Saviour, will esteem Christ exceeding precious, and in his Extremity will cry mightily to God; and he who heareth the Prayer of the Poor will attend to their Voice. And Jesus our great Deliverer, who always attentive to the good of his Church, and zealous for his Father's Glory, in the Days of his Flesh groaned in Spirit, *John* xi. 33. to his Father in Heaven, and with his Voice called dead

Lazarus

Lazarus from the Grave, and dry'd the Mourners Tears. He, I say, will compassionate the mourning Sinner, and bid him "fear not, but stand still, believe and see the Salvation of God," as *Moses* said to the Children of *Israel*, God would shew to them to Day : "For the *Egyptians* (or Sins) which you have seen (and were sore afraid of) to Day, you shall see them no more for ever. For the Lord will fight for you, and ye shall hold your Peace. Then said the Lord unto *Moses*, (and now unto *Jesus*) Wherefore criest thou unto me? (God speaks now in Christ to Man's Heart, as he did then to *Moses*) speak unto the People, to the *Israel* of God, that they go forward." And lift-thou up thy Shepherd's Rod, thy Word made effectual by thy Spirit, with which thou dost rule, comfort and guide the redeemed Race ; and stretch forth thy glorious Arm, Display the Banner of thy Love, and lead the Van, through the Red Sea of thy Sufferings, thine Agony and bloody Sweat, thy Cross and Passion, and let the noble Army of Martyrs march boldly on, surrounded by the heavenly Cloud before and behind, and conducted by an unerring Guide, the Leader of *Israel*, whose Arm brings forth Salvation. Thus the spiritual *Israelites*, who by Faith commit their Souls to his Conduct, through the Sea of his Blood, to the promised Inheritance, escape from the Hands of all their Enemies, and from all the Demands of the Law, and sing the triumphant Anthem. Thus he gently leads them that are with Young ; those in whose Hearts Christ is formed, or the heavenly Seed rooted : he transplants them from the State of Nature to a State of Grace ; and as *Israel* were not brought back to Bondage again, so we receive not the Spirit of Bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of Adoption to cry, *Abba, Father!* The God that brings to the Birth, gives Strength

Strength to bring forth, *Isa.* lxvi. 9. And those whom he brings forth and sets as a City on a Hill, he'll preserve for ever. The Sea itself was a Defence unto *Israel* whilst in the Midst of it: so whilst we rely on the Merits of Christ for Grace and Forgiveness, Sin looses its reigning and condemning Power. And though Satan and Sin, like *Pharaoh* and his Host, presume to pursue, and continue to harass Pilgrim-Hearts, yet being at length obliged to confess, like *Pharaoh*, that God fighteth for *Israel*, their Vigour abates, their Strength fails, their Hearts faint, and they cry, Let us flee from *Israel*, the believing Church, for neither Satan to accuse, nor Sin to condemn, dare stand in their Way, for the Blood of Christ cleanseth them from all Sin. Thus all *Israel* have the Honour to tread down the Strength of the Enemy; divine Justice acquits the penitent Believer; *Sion* hath received double for all her Sins, *Isa.* xl. 2. Her Sorrows have been great, and her Mercies are multiplied: Christ the great Emmanuel has doubly atoned for her Sins, and Heaven shall make double Amends for her Sorrow. God smiled on *Israel*, and they marched briskly; he frowned on the *Egyptians* and their Carriages moved slowly, and they began to be heavy-hearted; for his Looks gave them to understand that *Israel* was under Divine Protection, encompassed within the Red Sea, a Type of Christ's Blood, and therein surrounded with Salvation as with Walls and Bulwarks. So Satan and Sin, like *Pharaoh* and his Host, attempt to save themselves by Flight, but Jesus stretches out his Hand over the Sea of his Blood, points out the Certainty and Sufficiency of his Death and Resurrection, saying, *Behold my Hands and my Feet!* So the Sea of Christ's Blood, in his Sufferings and Intercession, viewed together, like the Sea in its full

full Strength, overflows and beats down all Oppositions, drowns all the Enemies of *Israel*, slavish Fears, Unbelief, and Hardness of Heart, there shall not be one of them left in the Believer's Heart. Hence it appears that all the Hopes of Victory, which the Devil and Sins have, are all drowned when they presume to encamp within the Walls of this atoning Sea, the Covenant of Grace. Thus the Lord saves all his *Israel*, universally and severally in the Day of Salvation, out of the Hands of the Devil and Sins; when the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head, *Gen. iii. 15.* and casteth out the strong Man armed, *Luke xi. 21.* And every Child of Redemption, can according to the Measure of Faith given him, behold those troublesome *Egyptians*, the Suggestions of Satan, and the Enticements of Sin dead on the Sea shore of Christ's Blood. And when the Believer hath effectually learnt by Faith the great Work which the Lord hath done for him and in him, and feels in himself, (like the Woman of *Samaria*, by touching Christ's Garment) that he is healed of his Plague, as she was of her Issue of Blood, though of twelve Years Continuance, *Mark v. 25, 27, 29.* Then will he fear the Lord, and believe the Word of his Servant. And will acknowledge all the Promises of God, which were to him as dead Letters before, to be in Christ Jesus both *Yea* and *Amen*, i. e. sure and everlasting to the Glory of God the Father, *2 Cor. i. 20.* He can then perceive the Voice of the Lord calling after him saying, "Remember these thy Privileges, O *Jacob* and *Israel*! for thou art my Servant; I have formed thee (for my Glory) thou shalt never be forgotten of me, I have blotted out as a thick Cloud thy Transgressions, and as a Cloud thy Sins; return unto me, for I have Redeemed thee. Sing O Heavens, for the Lord hath done it,"

Isa!

Iſa. xlii. 21, 22, 23. Thus all the Promises of God are to the believing Soul as so many strong Towers to hide him from the Face of his Enemies. For God has promised to drown his People's Sins in the Midst of the Sea, *Mic.* vii. 19. which is now come to pass, as every Believer experiences by Faith, within himself. The Lord seems to awake as one out of Sleep, and like a Giant refreshed with Wine, to smite the Enemies of the Believer's Soul, viz. the Devil and Sin, putting them to perpetual Reproach; as he did to the *Philistines*, the Enemies of *Israel*, when he smote them with Emerods, viz. a sore Disease in their hinder Parts, for presuming to take the Ark of God into their Possession; and obstinately detaining it, notwithstanding Dagon (their God) was fallen upon his Face to the Ground in its Presence, *Psal.* lxxviii. 65, 66. *1 Sam.* iv. 11. and v. 4, 6. And thus will he plague all impenitent Sinners, and all those "that forget God, and offend his Saints; that touch his Anointed, and do Harm to his Prophets: For 'tis better that a Millstone were hanged about their Neck, and they cast into the Midst of the Sea, than that they offend any one that believeth in me," saith Christ, *Matt.* xviii. 6. "Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no Harm," *1 Cron.* xvi. 22. *Psal.* cv. 15. Now the Believer may adopt the Language of *John* the Baptist, and cry to his Fellow-sinners, saying, *Repent, and behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sins of the World*, (of Believers to the End of Time) *John* i. 29. Now the Day of Salvation is come home to the Believer's Soul, and God's Promise is made good to him, which saith, "Behold the Days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the House of *Jacob*, or *Israel*, (God's believing Church) and with the House of *Judah* (all that are Heirs of God by Adoption,

and

and Joint-heirs with Christ, and are numbered amongst the Household of Faith, and are owned by the Name of *Israel*) not according to the former Covenant (of Works) which they brake. But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the House of *Israel*, after those Days, saith the Lord; (it shall be a Covenant of Grace) for I will put my Law in their inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my People: for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their Iniquity, and will remember their Sins no more." This is a glorious Promise, and yet God proceeds to reveal and confirm his Love to his People. "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a Light by Day, and the Ordinances of the Moon and Stars for a Light by Night, which divideth the Sea when the Waves thereof roar; the Lord of Hosts is his Name. If those Ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the Seed of *Israel*, or Household of Faith shall cease from being a royal Priesthood, or an holy Nation before me for ever. Also thus saith the Lord, If Heaven above can be measured, and the Foundations of the Earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off the Seed of *Israel*, for all that they have done, saith the Lord;" (As much as to say, I will not cast them off for ever!) (Glory be to God for all his gracious Promises.) *Jer.* xxxi. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37. 1 *Peter* ii. 9. The Lord also passed by before *Moses*, who then represented his Church, and God put him into a Clift of the Rock, being a Type of Christ, *Exod.* xxxiii. 32. And then consistent with the Attribute of Justice, after viewing the Church in Christ, who was bound from Eternity to make Satisfaction to his injured Justice: He therefore proclaimed himself, "The
K Lord,

Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping Mercy for Thousands (who venture their Salvation on the Merits and Mediation of his Son) forgiving Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin, but will by no Means clear the Guilty," impenitent Sinner, *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7. Or the formal hypocritical Professor. "Hear the Word of the Lord, ye Rulers and People: To what purpose are your Sacrifices unto me? when ye come to appear before me, saith the Lord. Who hath required this (Lip-service) at your Hands, to tread in my Courts? Bring no more vain Oblations; (such are your formal Round of Duties, and Common Prayers at Church, with unconsecrated Hearts) I am weary of them, they are a Trouble unto me, saith the Lord;" without the Spirit to help you to pray in Faith, and expect Forgiveness only for the Sake of Christ's Merits, viz. through his atoning Blood and Righteousness. Therefore, *Wash ye*, saith God, But where? Surely in the Blood of Jesus, there only may you make yourselves clean. (That *holy Water* from his pierced Side, *John* xix. 34. will purify the Heart, and enable you to do what God commands). Also "put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes; cease to do Evil, learn to do well; seek Judgment, relieve the Oppressed, judge the (Cause of the) Fatherless, plead for the Widow," *Isa.* i. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Thus shall the Children who are come to the Birth have Strength to come forth, when under the Pangs of the new Birth. God most graciously invites them, saying, "Turn to me, your Strong-hold, ye Prisoners of Hope; for by the Blood of Christ (given you for a Covenant) have I determined to bring you forth out of your Prison-house of Unbelief, into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God,"

Zech.

Zeck. ix. 11, 12. *Rom.* viii. 21. The Lord will not only bring forth, but will cleanse their Blood, which hath not been cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in *Sion*, (the Church) *Joel* iii. 21. Therefore, "come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord," as much as to say, Consider on what Terms I accept of your Persons and Performances, and make your scarlet Sins as white as Snow, *Isa.* i. 18. Behold ! it is for the sake of my Servant, and your Redeemer, *in whom my Soul delighteth*, *Isa.* xlii. 1. and because you were *chosen in him before the Foundation of the World*, *Eph.* i. 4. Therefore will I reveal myself unto you, and when you believe, (having your Understanding enlightened) that I have loved you with an everlasting Love, then will your Love to me be cordial and unfeigned : and thus become willing and obedient, through constraining Love, *1 Cor.* v. 14. to submit to the Righteousness of my Son, for your whole and only Salvation, without any Mixture or Composition of your own Endeavours, or self Righteousness, in point of Acceptance with God : then ye shall eat the Good of the Land of God's free Grace and redeeming Love ; but if ye refuse, and rebel, and oppose this Way of Salvation, ye shall be devoured with the Sword of God's Judgment and Justice, for the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, *Isa.* i. 18, 19, 20. It is written, *Sion shall be redeemed with Judgment*, viz. by the well-ordered Plan of unerring Wisdom, and her Converts with Righteousness, (wrought out by Christ the Mediator, and is called by Saint Paul, "The Righteousness of God which is revealed from Faith to Faith, in the Believer's Heart, as it is written, The Just shall live by Faith," *Rom.* i. 17.) But the Destruction of Sinners, who forsake and contemn this Way of Reconciliation with God, shall be without Mercy, *Isa.* i. 27, 28. But as for the

Lord's Servants, their Righteousness is of me, saith the Lord, Isa. liv. 17. "I know, (saith the Believer) in the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength; and in the Lord (Jesus) shall all the Seed of *Israel*, (*viz.* the Household of Faith) be justified, and shall glory," Isa. lxxv. 24, 25. Again, "Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O *Jacob*, and he that formed thee, O *Israel*; fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy Name, thou art mine. When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee: and when thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the Flame kindle upon thee," Isa. xliii. 1, 2. So safe is the Church of God from Destruction, that when all Things perish, they shall sustain no Loss; in the last Day, in the general Conflagration, when the whole World will be in a Flame, and burn as an Oven, *Mal.* iv. 1, 2. they shall tread down their Enemies like Ashes: A lively Resemblance of this was exhibited by the Presence of God the Son with *Shadrach*, *Mesbach* and *Abednego*, who were condemned to the burning fiery Furnace, for refusing to worship the golden Image which *Nebuchadnezzar* had set up: But to the King's great Surprise, he saw four Men loose, walking in the Midst of the Fire, without Hurt, and the Form of the Fourth was like the Son of God, who preserved them in such a wonderful Manner, that even the Smell of Fire had not passed on them, because they believed and put their Trust in God, *Dan.* iii. 23, 25. So in the Judgment-Day, though the great Globe itself be dissolved, happy will the Bride be in the Enjoyment of her adorable Husband, whose Love is unchangeable; for saith he, "I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of *Israel*, thy Saviour: I gave *Egypt* for thy Ransom.

Ransom. — Since thou wast precious in my Sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee : therefore will I give Men for thee ; and People for thy Life. Fear not ; for I am with thee ; I will bring thy Seed from the East, and gather thee from the West ; I will say to the North, Give up ; and to the South, Keep not back ; bring my Sons from far, and my Daughters from the Ends of the Earth ; even every one that is called by my Name, for I have created him for my Glory. (And says our Lord, “ The Son of Man will send forth his Angels, at the End of the World, with a great Sound of a Trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect from the four Winds, from one End of Heaven to the other.” And none can frustrate the Purpose of his Grace.) For I, even I, am the Lord ; and besides me there is no Saviour, (saith the great Emmanuel.) Yea, before the Day was, I am he, and there is none can deliver out of my Hand ; I will work, and who shall let it ? I am the Lord your holy one, the Creator of *Israel*, your King : which maketh a Way in the Sea, and a Path in the mighty Waters ; which bringeth forth the Chariot and Horse, the Army and the Power ; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise : they are extinct, they are quenched as Tow,” *Isa.* xliii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17. *Matt.* xxiv. 31. Also the Destruction of Sin shall be accomplished in God’s People, who pass through the Red Sea of Christ’s atoning Blood : they shall be delivered from the very Shadow of Death, and shall see all their Enemies extinct : And the envious Blaze of their transitory Life quenched for ever. Whilst they, (the Righteous) “ being delivered from the Power of Darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of God’s dear Son, sit triumphant at the Lord’s right Hand : having obtained Redemption through

through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of their Sins," *Col. i. 13, 14.* And even now, whilst on their Journey, their Hearts travel with them that go in the High-way of the Lord: and their Souls (which seemed deserted for a While) do at length rejoice and blossom as the Rose, and they shall blossom yet more abundantly, and rejoice, yea, with Joy and Singing: They shall see the Glory of the Lord, and the Excellency of our God: Even now, during the spiritual Warfare, their weak Hands and feeble Knees shall be strengthened, perhaps by the Means of godly Ministers and serious Christians, Fathers in *Sion*, who are directed to "say to them who are of a fearful Heart, Be strong, fear not; for Behold! God will come with Vengeance on your Enemies, (*viz.* the Remainder of your Corruptions) and with a Recompence to you, who confidently Believe in the Name of his Son. (For he will come and save you to the utmost, and all them that come to God by him, *Heb. vii. 25.*) For the Eyes of the Blind shall be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf shall be unstopped, then shall the lame Man leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb sing, and the Heart which was once a Wilderness of Sin and Vanity shall become a Field of Fruitful Meditations, and the Tongue utter savoury Discourses concerning the Waters of Life, which are like Streams in the Soul, flowing to Life eternal; (For out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh, *Matt. xii. 34.*) For the Heart, though once barren and dry, like parched Ground, shall become a Pool, and Springs of Water," *Isa. xxxv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.* They who drink of the Waters that Christ giveth, shall never thirst any more; for it shall be in them a Well of living Water, a never-failing Spring to quench the Thirst of the Blessed, that hunger and

thirst

thirst after Righteousness, (*viz.* the Righteousness of God) for they shall be filled, both with the Bread and Water of Life freely, *John* iv. 14. *Matt.* v. 6. Their thirsty Land, (their Hearts) shall be so filled with the Springs of the Water of Life flowing from that Rock Christ Jesus, that in the Habitation (of their Heart) where Dragons (or Devils) each lay, and nurtured every beloved Sin in its Turn, *viz.* the right Hand Sin, the right Eye Sin, the Sin which did easily beset them; instead of those lurking Fiends which made the Ground of the Heart barren; there shall grow (by Virtue of the Fountain of Life springing continually from Christ in the Believer's Heart) Grass, with Reeds and Rushes, all the Tokens of Fertility, *Isa.* xxxv. 7. The Field of Grace which Christ opens to the Soul's View, shall be so rich by constant Watering every Moment with the Dews of Heaven, that it shall become a green Pasture, sufficient to feed God's Sheep. "Thou shalt feed me (saith *David*) in a green Pasture, and lead me forth besides the Waters of Comfort," *Psal.* xxxii. 2. God will preserve his People Night and Day, least any hurt them, *Isa.* xxvii. 3. and cause them to hear a Voice behind them, when they err on the Right or on the Left, saying, *This is the Way, walk ye in it*, *Isa.* xxx. 21. For there is an High-way for God's People to walk in, and it is called "The Way of Holiness. The Unclean shall not pass over it: but it shall be for those who are way-faring Men, whose Faces are *Sion*-wards, Virgins in Christ, though counted Fools by the World, shall not err therein. And no Lion shall be there!" The true Believer need not say, like the slothful Man, "There is a Lion in the Way;" (*viz.* Unbelief and the Fear of Man, which brings a Snare to his Soul, *Prov.* xxix. 25.) "Neither shall any ravenous Beast go thereon,"
 nor

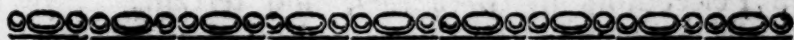
nor any contentious Person shall be found there, for there is no such Custom among the Churches of Christ, *Isa.* xxxv. 8, 9. *Prov.* xxvi. 13. *1 Cor.* xi. 16. But the Redeemed shall walk there. And thus the Ransomed of the Lord having received the *Breathing Winds*, (the Holy Spirit) shall be enabled to mount up upon the Wings of Faith, from the *dry Bone Valley* of the Shadow of Death, and “return to *Sion* with Songs and everlasting Joy upon their Heads, they shall obtain Joy and Gladness, and Sorrow and Sighing shall flee away,” *Isa.* xxxv. 9, 10. The Lord by his Spirit doth and will call and qualify Ministers “to preach good Tidings unto the Meek. He’ll send them to bind up the Broken-hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that were bound (in Unbelief); To publish the acceptable Year of the Lord; crying, Behold! now is the accepted Time, now is the Day of the Salvation of our God, to comfort all that mourn in *Sion*; to give unto them Beauty for Ashes, the Oil of Joy instead of Mourning, the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness; that they might be called Trees of Righteousness, the Planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified,” *Isa.* lxi. 1, 2, 3. Thus Christ allures his Church, his Bride, bringing her up out of the Wilderness of Sin and Unbelief, and causeth her to lean on him her Beloved, *Cant.* viii. 5. For God will make his People willing in the Day of his Power; he will put his Fear before their Eyes, and write his Law in their Hearts; and they shall be his People, and he will be their God, *Jer.* xxxi. 33. Here we may observe how incessantly God works to prepare his intended Bride, and makes her ready. God the Father draws, God the Son receives, and God the Holy Ghost sanctifies the Soul; for these Titles, *Father, Son, and Spirit*, signify,
not

not the Manner of Existing in the Deity, but the Manner of Acting in the Oeconomy of Man's Salvation: and thus the mysterious Espousals of Christ and his Church is consummated, never to be put asunder. God having loved her once, he will love her to the End, *John* xiii. 1. Having betrothed her to himself for ever, *Hos.* ii. 19. And promised to love her, and he declares that he hath loved her with an everlasting Love: "therefore with Loving-kindness (saith he) have I drawn thee unto me) *Jer.* xxxi. 3. Every Bride (every faithful Soul) being united to Christ in Spirit receives the Word sowed into an honest and good Heart, that is, in Sincerity, and brings forth Fruit unto God, some Thirty, some Sixty, and some an Hundred Fold, *Mark* iv. 20. Such are like Trees planted by the Water-side, that bring forth Fruit in due Season: whose Leaf shall not wither, but flourish for ever, *Psal.* i. 3. Saint Paul was careful to espouse the Church as a chaste Virgin to Christ, who was raised from the Dead, that they might bring forth Fruit unto God, *Rom.* vii. 4. Implying that unless the Church as a chaste Virgin is married to Christ, not to the Law, there is no Acceptance, and that Union is effected by the genuine Operation of the Holy Ghost, whose Anointing abides in Believers for ever, 1 *John* ii. 20, 27. Without this, I say, they can in no Wise bring forth Fruit unto God. Hear what the Lord saith to the House of *Israel*, under the Similitude of a Vineyard which he had planted: "And he looked that it should bring forth Grapes, and it brought forth wild Grapes," *Isa.* v. 2. And why? Because they went about to establish their own Righteousness; to encompass themselves with Sparks of their own kindling, therefore (without the Righteousness of Christ) they must lie down in Sorrow, *Isa.* l. 11.

Christ being the true Vine, and the Church the Branches, therefore without him she can bear no good Fruit, she can do nothing, *John* xv. 5. But now, she being in Christ, she is fruitful in every good Work, and increasing in the Knowledge of God, *Col.* i. 10. And whereas, in Christ, there is no Difference of Male and Female, &c. but his Church collected out of every Nation, Tongue and People, which he has redeemed unto God by his Blood, for to reign with him for ever, *Rev.* v. 9, 10. Thus he compares them; "As the Lily among Thorns (saith Christ) so is my Love among the Daughters. And as the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons," *Cant.* ii. 2, 3. "Behold! (the Beauty and Glory of the Church) ye Despisers, and wonder, and perish. For God works a Work, yea in the Hearts of his Chosen, in your Days, which you in no wise believe, though a Man declares it unto you," *Acts* xiii. 41. View the Difference Christ puts between you and Believers. O how beautiful does a full-blown Lily appear among Thorns? and how pleasant is an Apple-tree in full Blossom among the Trees of the Wood? and is not the Fruit thereof sweet to the Taste? "The Fruit of the Righteous is a Tree of Life," *Prov.* xi. 30. Because when this Fruit, by divine Direction, drops into an honest and good Heart, it converts and brings true Wisdom into that Soul for ever; for "happy is the Man that findeth Wisdom, and retaineth her; for she is a Tree of Life to them that lay hold upon her," *Prov.* iii. 13, 18. Therefore "he that winneth Souls is said to be wise," *Prov.* xi. 30. Having received true Wisdom and spiritual Understanding, *Col.* i. 9. "Also they that be wise, (having been taught of God) shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament; and they that turn
many

many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever," *Dan. xii. 3.* For the Words of the Wise are as Goads, and as Nails fastened in a sure Place, in the Hearts of the Godly, by the Masters of the Assemblies, viz. Ministers given them for that Purpose by Christ himself, the *Shepherd* and *Bishop* of our Souls, *Eccles. xii. 11.* For their Words being seasoned with Salt, minister Grace unto their Hearers, *Eph. iv. 29.*

FORasmuch, O Lord, as thy Israel of old were saved by going through the Red Sea, having no other Way to escape from their Enemies; give us, we pray thee, a full Conviction of our Misery by Nature, that the condemning Power of thy holy Law might force us likewise to escape for our Lives through the Red Sea of thy Son's atoning Blood; and also to act Faith in the Veracity of thine infallible Word, wherein thou hast graciously promised to drown our Sins in the Depth of the Sea, Mic. vii. 19.



S E C T. V.

Persecutors will be punished. The Righteous love Peace, in Order to enjoy their Lord. They build their Hope on CHRIST the Rock, a sure Foundation. CHRIST gives them the Dewes of Heaven.

BY and by the Ungodly, who are compared to Thorns that grieve God's Lilies, (his Church on Earth) shall be gathered from out of God's

Kingdom, with all other Things that do offend, with the Devil and his Angels, and be cast into Hell, the unquenchable Fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of Teeth. And then shall God's Lilies, the Righteous, shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father. He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear, what God will do in the Harvest of the World, unto all persecuting, scoffing, offensive Thorns; God the Son will then say to his Angels or Reapers, "Grub up those offensive Thorns, which have wounded me so often in my Church on Earth; and gather the Tares from among my Wheat, and bind them in Bundles, and cast both Thorns and Tares into Hell-Fire," *Isa. xxxiii. 12. Matt. xiii. 30, 40, 41, 42, 43. and Matt. viii. 12.* And there you shall all lie down, pent up as Sheep, whilst Death, viz. the second Death shall gnash upon you with his Teeth; nay, feed on you like a voracious Lion, *Psal. xlix. 14.* And there you'll bewail your Folly, and say one to another, (mark the Language of condemned Souls, ye Persecutors in *Gillingham*, and refrain) "We Fools, accounted the Lives of Professors Madneis, and their End to be without Honour, who defended the Truth on God's Behalf, (like *Lot in Sodom*) and thereby lost their worldly Goods; how are they numbered with the Just, and their Lot among the Saints?" *Wisd. v. 4, 5.* How are the Righteous Souls whom we held in Derision, now had in everlasting Remembrance? *Psal. cxii. 6.* While we are rejected with Shame, and reprobated with everlasting Contempt, *Dan. xii. 2.* Burning alive in this Lake of Fire and Brimstone, *Rev. xix. 20.* How are we tormented in this Flame, in everlasting Despair! where the Worm, the Guilt of Conscience dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched? *Mark ix. 43, 44.* Now we see the Devil that deceived us,

is also cast alive into this Lake, and shall be tormented Day and Night with us for ever, *Rev. xx. 10.* Together with False-Prophets, *viz.* unconverted Free-will Preachers, who by prophesying smooth Things kept us asleep, and thereby deceived us; crying, *Peace, Peace*, if we came often within the Church Walls; when the Peace of God was not within our Hearts, and our poor Souls unrenewed, *Isa. xxx. 10.* Woe be unto such! *For there is no Peace, saith God, to the Wicked*, who are not born again, *Isa. lviii. 21.* John iii. 3. Now alas! we are the Companions of all those who forgot God, and obeyed not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, *2 Thes. i. 8.* Better it had been for us that a Mill-stone had been hanged about our Neck, and we cast alive into the Midst of the Sea, than that we should have scoffed at, and offended any of God's faithful Followers, who believed in Jesus Christ, *Matt. xviii. 6.* For now we are punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power, *2 Thes. i. 9.* Here let me intreat you, Friends and Neighbours, attend, pause a little, and consider the Dismal Condition of the Damned Souls! who must be forced to endure the hot Thunder-bolts of God's Vengeance, the Fierceness of his Wrath, and fiery Indignation, *Psal. lxxviii. 48, 49.* For upon them God will rain Snares, Fire and Brimstone, and an horrible Tempest; this shall be the Portion of their Cup for ever, *Psal. xi. 6.* In a Labyrinth of Sorrow and Woe, sinking! sinking! sinking! in endless Misery for evermore in the bottomless Pit of Fire, *Rev. xx. 1, 14.* And this Hell is not Imagination, but Sensation, experienced by God's dear Children, during their Pilgrimage on Earth, and felt in the Anguish of their Souls, especially after Relapses into Sin; for every true Believer, when

when convinced that he has broken the holy Commandment of God, and thereby dishonoured his holy Name, finds a Hell in his Conscience in this World, though in a lesser Degree than the Damned in Hell; for the Hope or Relief alleviates the Pain: yet true is the Saying, *A wounded Spirit who can bear?* Prov. xviii. 14. Guilt is a Canker-worm, which biteth the Soul continually, 'till the Balm of Gilead, the Blood of Christ, heals the Wound, which would have proved mortal, had it not been for the Almighty Physician, Jer. viii. 22. This is the horrible Pit, the miry Clay out of which God delivered David, when he set him on the Rock, Christ Jesus; he had been earnestly crying unto the Lord, and patiently waiting, though in very great Distress, P/al. xl. 1, 2. For saith he, "I am weary of my Groaning, every Night wash I my Bed, and water my Couch with my Tears. Mine Eyes are consumed with Grief (by Reason of my Sin)" P/al. vi. 6, 7. A Christian, who may be tempted to steal a Dram of sinful Pleasure, shall pay for it four-fold in Tears of penitential Grief, Anguish of Soul, Horror of Conscience, and inward Distress and Trouble in this World: unless Christ, the good Physician will be pleased speedily to heal his Wound. (This I know by Experience) And therefore, I suppose that no justified Soul will presume to sin *that Grace might abound*; but rather say with Saint Paul, *God forbid!* and *God forbid!* again, that ever such a Thought should once arise in a Believer's Breast, Rom. vi. 1, 2. For having felt the Anguish of a wounded Conscience, and knowing the Terror of the Lord, will conclude with holy David, that *Blessed are all they who fear the Lord*, that honour him, and delight to walk in his Ways, for they shall eat the Labour of their Hands, even here on Earth, (*viz.*) Peace of Conscience,

science, and happy shall they be hereafter, *Psal.* cxxviii. 1, 2. For "Blessed are they who die in the Lord, even so, saith the Spirit, for they shall rest from their Labours, and their Works shall follow them;" (*follow*, observe, not go before) *Rev.* xiv. 13. It is Christ that goes before to prepare a Place. The Righteous shall consider this in the Days of their Pilgrimage, and turn their Feet unto God's Testimonies; nay, they must consider, though prone to forget, for God is their Monitor, and many shall be purified, and made white, and tried (like as Silver is tried, and made meet for the Master's Use) but the Wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the Wicked shall understand (for the Way of Peace they never knew, having no Fear of God before their Eyes) but the Wise shall understand, *Dan.* xii. 10. God will give them an Understanding Heart, 1 *King.* iii. 9. to choose the better Part here, which shall not be taken from them hereafter, *Luke* x. 42. For God will surely guide them here on Earth, with his Counsel, and afterwards receive them to Glory, *Psal.* lxxiii. 24. They love to sit under his Banner with great Delight, his Fruit being sweet to their Taste; for he brings them into his Banqueting-House, and his Banner over them is Love. (And when their Cup runs over, like *David's*, *Psal.* xxiii. 5.) they often in their first Love at the Time of their Espousals, &c. when he carries his Lambs in his Bosom, cry out personally, being jealous of their Backsliding Hearts, "Stay me with Flagons (of spiritual Ointments, or with Cordials) comfort me with Apples (from my Christ, the Tree of Life) for I am sick of Love. My Soul fainteth for the Courts of the Lord's House, to make my Calling and Election sure. Now when they call upon him, he soon doth answer, and saith unto them,

them, *Here am I.* Presently his left Hand is under their Heads (to support them) and his right Hand doth embrace and cherish them with Cordials of Love. Now God's young Converts charge all about them, not to disturb their Peace with their best Beloved, nor awake him, or cause him to withdraw, 'till he pleaseth," *Cant. ii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.* But rather unite in the Enjoyment of their new Lord and Master. And therefore they cry out, "Come, let us fall down and worship, and kneel before the Lord our Maker: for he is the Lord our God, it is he that hath made us (thus happy) and not we ourselves, we are (now become) his People; and (Blood-bought) Sheep of his Pasture. Let us therefore go our Way into his Gates with Thanksgiving, and into his Courts with Praise. Oh! let us be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name. For the Lord is gracious, and his Mercy is everlasting, and his Truth endureth (to his Chosen) from Generation to Generation," *Psal. c. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.* Thus they break forth into Singing, being under his Shadow, where they have great Satisfaction, and dwell in Safety. "O how amiable are thy Dwellings, thou Lord of Hosts, my Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, with Desire to enter into the Courts of the Lord; my Heart and my Flesh cry out for the living God." Thus there is nothing in this World so pleasant to the believing Soul as the Enjoyment of God, either in his private, or public Worship. Here, saith the longing Believer, I may sit down with Pleasure, and lay my Young, *i. e.* drop my Tears of Repentance, and pour out my Soul in penitential Sighs, as a Prisoner of Hope; he'll receive my Sighs into his Bosom: he'll put my Tears in his Bottle. Being yet at home in the Body, I long to be dissolved, and to be with Christ: He is my Husband,

Husband, my Father, my Friend, my King, and my God. I speak from Experience, and can testify that "blessed are they who dwell in thy House, they will be always praising thee; for one Day in thy Courts is better than a Thousand: yea, it is better to be a Door-keeper in the House of the Lord, than to dwell in the Tents of Wickedness!" and if so now, what will be the Joys of Heaven? Therefore, blessed is the Man whose Strength is in the Lord, (whose Life is hid with Christ in God) and whose Heart travelleth in the Way with them who passing through the Valley of *Baca* (as God's People of old did in going to *Jerusalem* to worship) make it into a Well; they dig so deep into the Valley of Humiliation, 'till they find Christ, the Well-spring of Life. The Rain also filleth the Pools; God's Showers of Grace, Faith, Hope and Charity, fill their humble Souls with Righteousness, Peace and Joy in Believing; and the Bones that were once broken through Unbelief, do now rejoice, *Psal.* lxxxiv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10. Thus the River of Life, that makes glad the City of God, and every Member of the Church triumphant in Heaven, drops down on every Member of the Church militant here on Earth, and fills their Souls with divine Joy, *Psal.* xlv. 4. For they shall be abundantly satisfied with the Fatness of thy House, and thou shalt make them drink of the River of thy Pleasure: For with thee is the Fountain of Life, *Psal.* xxxvi. 8, 9. And because they resemble Christ, being one with him in Spirit, their God anoints them with the same Oil of Gladness here below above their unbelieving Fellow-creatures. Now they love Righteousness, and hate Iniquity, *Psal.* xlv. 7. Also desire to dwell together in the Unity of Spirit, in the Bond of Peace, and in Righteousness of Life, *Eph.* iv. 3. "Be-

hold! how good and joyful a Thing it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity. It is like the precious Ointment upon *Aaron's* Head, that ran down to the Beard, and from thence to the Skirts of the Clothing;" viz. to all Believers. In this Communion of Saints is included the Forgiveness of Sins: For the Showers of Grace in Christian Fellowship (where God bestows his Blessings) are compared to the Dew that descended upon the Mountain of *Sion*, where the Tribes of *Abraham* assembled, and where God promised his Blessing, and Life for evermore, *Psal.* cxxxiii. 1, 2, 3. For God's Care of his Church is so great, when they wander from him like silly Sheep; which too often is the Case, that he orders the Trumpet to be blown in *Sion*, and to sound an Alarm in his holy Mountain, that his People might be gathered together into a solemn Assembly, that they might sanctify a Fast, by Weeping and Mourning for Sin. Then will the Lord be jealous for his Church, and pity his People, *Joel* ii. 1, 12, 15, 18. Then this heavenly Dew, by Virtue of their Union with Christ their Head, and through the Operation of the Holy Ghost, falls down on every Member of the Church, the mystical Body of Christ. All who are united to him, and become Branches of the true Vine, shall partake of his Fulness, and receive in the Assembly of Saints, fresh Manifestations of God's everlasting Love, which was so bountifully poured on them by the divine Unction, or Anointing of the Holy Ghost, whereby they were set apart from the World, on the Day of their Espousals with Christ. Which Anointing the Apostle saith abideth in them, and will teach them all Things, and lead them into all Truth. Such are they to whom God hath promised eternal Life, 1 *John* ii. 25, 27. and such is their Priviledge; they are justified by
Faith,

Faith, having made Peace with God through Christ. They are now of the Circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus; and have no Confidence in the Flesh, *Phil. iii. 3.* but acknowledge their Sufficiency is of God, *2 Cor. iii. 5.* and that through Believing they enter into Rest: "For there remaineth a Rest for the People of God." And he that hath entered into his Rest, he also hath ceased from his own Works (from Working for Life) as truly as God did from his when he sanctified the Sabbath Day, *Heb. iv. 3, 9, 10.* Yet the Believer useth all Diligence to make his Calling and Election sure, *2 Peter i. 10.* which he is enabled to do; having through Grace followed Christ in the Regeneration, *Matt. xix. 28.* He proves him to be "the true Light which lighteth every Man (who is enlightened) that cometh into the World," *John i. 9.* And therefore he that followeth Christ shall not walk in Darkness, but shall have the Light of Life, *John viii. 12.* Such are the Salt of the Earth, and Light of the World; who are like a City on a Hill, which cannot be hid; *Matt. v. 13, 14.* Therefore the Apostle exhorts Believers (who have tasted that the Lord is gracious) not to forsake the Assembling of themselves together, as the Manner of some is, *Heb. x. 25.* Because in the Midst of such Counsellors there is Safety, *Prov. xi. 14.* They being capable of directing Sinners in the Way to Heaven; for it is said, *The Saints shall judge the World,* *1 Cor. vi. 2.* They being Heirs of God, and Joint-heirs with Christ, *Rom. viii. 17.* Having their Understanding enlightened to know the Mind of Christ, he saith unto them, "Whosoever Sins ye remit (or declare to be remitted by the Direction of the Spirit) they are remitted unto them; and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained," *John xx. 23.* The

Spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets, so are the Spirits of Believers, *1 Cor.* xiv. 32. When the Apostles perceived the Grace that was given to Saint *Paul*, they gave him the Right-hand of Fellowship, *Gal.* ii. 9. They being thus enlightened judge with the Wisdom of the Just, whose Path and Judgment shines more and more until the perfect Day, *Prov.* iv. 18. He that hath believed in the Merits of Christ, and firmly fixed his Hope on him as his sure Foundation (disdaining every other Prop) having viewed him by an Eye of Faith, knows him to be the only tried and precious Corner-stone, which God (and not Man) hath laid in *Zion*, viz. the Church (he will not because God saith) he shall not make Haste, (to run from his Anchor of Hope) *Isa.* xxviii. 16. He will not be Diffident; for he knows there is no other Way (than what God hath appointed) to save his immortal Soul. And therefore will not be carried about to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine, *Eph.* iv. 14. "To whom shall we go, saith *Peter*, (when Unbelievers went away from Christ) thou hast the Words of eternal Life," *John* vi. 68. "Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life," *John* xiv. 6. And in this Way Believers go from Strength to Strength, 'till every one appears before God in the Wedding Garment of Christ's Righteousness, in the Assembly of the Just, in *Sion* above, *Isa.* lxxxiv. 7. Thus shall the Just arrive from one Degree of Grace to another, and grow in the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, *2 Peter* iii. 18. And he will instruct the Ignorant; for to whom shall God teach Knowledge, or whom shall he make to understand Doctrine? them that are weaned from the Milk, and drawn from the Breasts; them that are yet childish: and to them he will give Precept upon Precept, Line upon Line, here a Little, and there

there a Little. That their weary Souls might rest in God's Ways, and be refreshed, *Isa.* xxviii. 9, 10, 12. By Pureness, by Knowledge, by Long-suffering, by Kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by Love unfeigned, by the Word of Truth, by the Power of God, by the Armour of Righteousness on the right Hand and on the Left, by Honour and Dishonour, by evil Report and good Report; being reviled as Deceivers, and yet true, as unknown to the World, and yet well known to Christ; as dying to the World and Sin, and behold we live; as chastened, but not killed; as sorrowful thro' much Tribulation, yet always rejoicing that we are counted worthy to suffer Shame for Christ: as being poor in Spirit, yet through Grace making many rich in God, and Heirs of his glorious Kingdom; as having nothing, and yet possessing all Things in Christ our Head, *2 Cor.* vi. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. For by Prayer and Supplication our Requests are made known unto God, *Phil.* iv. 6. whose Eyes are over the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their Prayers, *1 Peter* iii. 12. Who commands his sanctified Ones, and his mighty Ones who rejoice in his Highness (which none but his mighty Angels, and Souls justified by Faith can do) who are willing to obey God's Commands, to execute his Anger against his Enemies, especially by the two-edged Sword of God's Word, *Psal.* cxlix. 6. *Isa.* xlii. 3. Angels are ministring Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation, *Heb.* i. 14.

TEACH thy Church, O Lord, to lie before thee in the Dust, on Account of her great Obligation to thee for sending protecting Angels to guard her upon Earth. And likewise for thy sanctifying Graces whereby she is become the true Circumcision, which worship thee

thee in Spirit, and have no Confidence in the Flesh. Help us, O Lord, to live to thy Glory, never to tarnish the Cross of Christ, which hath freed us from the Dominion of Satan. Neither let us grieve thy holy Spirit, whereby we are sealed to the Day of Redemption. And although the Wicked, like prickly Thorns, are often vexing the Righteous (as was the Case with Lot in Sodom) yet we pray thee, forgive them, for they know not what they do, lest at last they be bound up in Bundles, and according to thy Word, cast alive into Hell, Matt. xiii. 30.



S E C T. VI.

CHRIST appears a Man of War, teaches his Disciples to be Soldiers. Promises them glorious Titles, and to keep them from the Power of the Devil, which overcometh the World by his Temptations. The Bride views her Beloved on the bloody Cross, she groans and dies unto Sin.

NOW behold, and wonder ye Hosts above! and be astonished, ye Sons of Men! that Emmanuel himself should stand in need of Assistance from Heaven, to compleat Man's Redemption. For lo! a mighty Angel was sent from God to strengthen our blessed and for ever adorable Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in his Agony and bloody Sweat; who had just entered his last Conflict against the Powers of Hell, and by way of Sympathy with our feeble Flesh, he prayed if it

was

was possible that bitter Cup might pass from him (which could not be granted, and the Church, his Bride, redeemed) and therefore, an Angel was sent to comfort him, *Luke* xxii. 4. Experienced Ministers also are commanded to watch over Christ's Flock, and build them up in their most holy Faith. Faith is the Victory whereby we overcome the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, *1 Peter* v. 2. *1 John* v. 4. And thus through the atoning Merits and prevailing Conquest of the Captain of their Salvation, they go on conquering and to conquer, *Rev.* vi. 2. For he hath promised never to leave them, but reign over them, guide and support them, until he hath put all their Enemies under his Feet, *1 Cor.* xv. 25. Thus the Lord Jesus is a Man of War, *Exod.* xv. 3. And appears majestic in his warlike Dress, being clothed in a Vesture dipt in Blood, and his Name is called, *The Word of God*; for he accomplishes the *Will* of God. And he hath on his Vesture, and on his Thigh, a Name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS, *Rev.* xix. 13, 16. And also he appears by Faith to the View of his Saints and Soldiers, like unto the Son of Man, though in Glory, with a priestly Garment down to the Foot, and girt about his Paps with a golden Girdle (resembled by that of the High-priest, *Exod.* xxviii. 8.) His Head and Hairs white like Wool, as white as Snow. And his Eyes as a Flame of Fire. And his Feet like unto fine Brass, burned in a Furnace; and his Voice as the Sound of many Waters. And he hath in his right Hand seven Stars; and out of his Mouth goes a sharp two-edged Sword; and his Countenance is as the Sun shining in his Strength. And when the Saints see by Faith their Captain thus arrayed in glorious Majesty, they fall down at his Feet as dead, dead indeed to their own Ability
of

of obtaining Salvation without him, and prove it true that he that looseth his Life shall find it, *Matt. x. 39.* For immediately Christ lays his right Hand upon them, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, I am he that liveth and was dead (I died for your Sins, in your Stead) but behold! I am alive for evermore, Amen. And for your everlasting Comfort, my faithful Followers! I have the Keys of Hell and of Death, *Rev. i. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.* All Power is given to me in Heaven and in Earth, *Matt. xxvii. 18.* I am he that openeth (the Gates of Heaven and Hell) and no Man shutteth; and shutteth, and no Man openeth, or can open them, *Rev. iii. 7.* I am the Root and the Offspring of *David*, and the bright and Morning Star, (that ushers in eternal Day to the Soul) And I will give unto every Man according as his Work shall be," *Rev. xxii. 12, 16.* And this is the Work of God which he will graciously reward, even to believe in Christ whom God hath sent, *John vi. 29.* And for further Encouragement, we are exhorted to lay hold of his Strength, and confide in his Righteousness, without which we can do nothing, *Isa. xxvii. 5. 2 Cor. xii. 9.* Our Lord also animates his Soldiers with that heart-cheering Promise, "To him that overcometh, I will give him to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the Midst of the Paradise of God," *Rev. ii. 7.* It is true, Christians are taught to expect Tribulation, and severe Trials; The Devil will cast some of you into Prison for a Season (God's Children are sometimes permitted to be imprisoned by Men, and sometimes by Unbelief) for the Trial of Faith, when God hides his Face: yet it is said, "He that proves faithful unto Death (by relying and trusting on the Promises of God) shall receive a Crown of Life; and shall never be hurt (as an Unbeliever will) by the second Death,"

Death," *ver.* 10, 11. Again, "To him that holds fast my Name, and does not deny, but confess my Faith; (me the Object of Faith, according to my Testimony) even where Satan's Seat is; I will give him to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white Stone (in Token of Absolution, *i. e.* full Assurance of Faith) and in the Stone a new Name written, which no Man knoweth, saving he that received it, *ver.* 17. "Moreover I will give him Power over the Nations, and he shall rule them with a Rod of Iron, as the Vessels of a Potter shall they be broken in Shivers," *ver.* 27. (Their Errors and false Religion shall fall like *Dagon*; or be crushed as *Nebuchstan*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 4. The Saints shall have Power delegated from Christ to judge the World; *i. e.* by Doctrine and Conversation on Earth, and be an especial Jury in the great Assizes in the last Day, 1 *Cor.* vi. 2.) "And I will give him the Morning Star," *Rev.* ii. 28. to guide him safe on Earth, *viz.* myself, my Word, and Spirit, *Rev.* xxii. 16. "And he shall shine forth like the Sun in the Kingdom of my Father," *Matt.* xiii. 43. I will likewise clothe him with white Raiment, and I will not blot out his Name out of the Book of Life; but I will confess his Name before my Father, and before his holy Angels, *Rev.* iii. 5. Here let the despised Believer view his Happiness in having such an Advocate in the great Day of Retribution, when the Heavens and Earth shall flee away, and the Dead both small and great shall stand before God (who is his Friend): Then shall the Books be opened, The Book of God's Omniscience of knowing all Things; and by his omnipotent Power will bring to the Minds of all the World every Sin they committed in Life, which were not repented of and pardoned. "When the Spirit of Truth cometh, he will convince the World

of Sin, and bring all Things to Remembrance,* *Jobn* xvi. 8. and xiv. 26. Then shall be open'd the Book of Conscience before the Law: the Book of Sins committed under the Law; and likewise another Book of Sins committed under the Gospel: besides the Book of Life. Then shall the Dead both small and great be judged out of the Records which are written in those Books, according to their Works. And whosoever is not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life (as a pardoned, Sinner, who by Faith hath received a Reprieve viz. the Spirit of Adoption from the King of *Sion*) shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, *Rev.* xx. 11, 12, 13, 15. But all Works of Faith, and Labours of Love and Patience through Hope, *1 Thes.* i. 3. shall obtain a Reward of Grace; and such shall be received with "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World," *Matt.* xxv. 34. Then it will appear no small Privilege to have our Names written in the Book of Life, never to be blotted out. And even now our Comfort is to have a Communication with Heaven, by our Union with Christ, who saith, "I have set before thee an open Door," a Door of Grace, "where thou mayest go in and out, and find Pasture" both for Soul and Body: "For Godliness hath the Promise of this Life, as well as that which is to come," *1 Tim.* iv. 8. Thy little Strength and little Faith shall never fail; for "I will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flax" in the weak Believer, *Matt.* xii. 20. But the deceitful Heart and Tongue shall be confounded: And I will make the Children of Satan, who continually spurn against the Interest of my Gospel, one Day worship before thy Feet; and let them know that I have loved thee, because thou hast kept the Word.

Word of my Patience (and hast borne my Cross through great Persecutions, and severe Conflicts with Satan) I will also keep thee from the fatal Hour of Temptation (perhaps from the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life) by which the Devil overcometh all the World (of Unbelievers.) Thy Trial shall be but short, for " behold! I come quickly, and my Reward is with me. Therefore hold fast that Grace which I have given thee, that no Man take thy Crown!" thou hast obtained a good Report, beware of Apostacy, lest thou lose thy Honour. " For him that overcometh will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the Name of the City of my God, which is new *Jerusalem* which cometh down from Heaven: and I will write upon him my new Name," (*i.e.* my adopted Son) *Rev. iii. 8, &c.* O glorious Time! when it shall appear, the holy City, new *Jerusalem*, is come down from Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband, *Rev. xxi. 3.* All the Saints crowned with Glory, and clothed in fine Linen, being the Righteousness of the Saints, and their Bodies shining like the Sun, shall then appear in such Splendor, as the Heart of Man never conceived the Glory God hath laid up for those who loved him, *1 Cor. ii. 9.* Every Saint thus adorned shall be set as a living Stone in the Place appointed by the eternal Wisdom of the Father, who designed from Eternity to consummate or compleat this spiritual Tabernacle in the Church triumphant. Ye also as living Stones are built up a spiritual House, ye being a chosen Generation for that Purpose, *1 Peter ii. 5, 9.* He said unto me. *It is done,* *i.e.* in my determined Council. *I am the Beginning and the End,* saith the Lord Jesus, *Rev. xxi. 6.* Therefore fear not, thou little Warrior, (young

Beginner) fight on through my Grace, 'till thou arrive to Glory. "For he that overcometh shall inherit all Things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son," *Rev.* xxi. 6, 7. I may add, although thou mayest loose thy first Love, and like the wise Virgins sleep with the Foolish, and be lukewarm in exercising thy Graces for a Season, and Christ seem to spue thee out of his Mouth; (Yet he saith, "I the Lord change not, therefore the Sons of *Jacob* are not confounded") I will bring my Wanderers home, none of the Purchase of my Blood shall perish. "I counsel thee therefore to buy Gold of me tried in the Fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white Raiment, that thou mayest be clothed; receive my Grace and my Righteousness, that the Shame of thy Nakedness do not appear; (for this is the Wedding garment required of thee by God in holy Scripture) and anoint thine Eyes with Eye Salve, that thou mayest see" the excellent Oeconomy of Salvation appointed to redeem thy Soul; that is to say, by the Mediation of Christ, in whom the Father is well pleased with all who trust and believe in it. "Therefore as thou art my Bride (by Decree) in my Merits and Righteousness only thou mayest make thy Boast; and in that Dress worship God in the Beauty of Holiness. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent. Behold! and see my Condescension, once I stoop'd to a painful and bloody Death on the Cross, to purchase Redemption for you: now I stand at the Door of your Hearts, by my Spirit to knock (though I am in Glory), if any Man hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne.

Throne. He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Captain of our Salvation saith unto his Warlike Soldiers, *i. e.* what the Spirit saith unto the Churches," *Rev.* iii. 15 — 22. Behold! the astonishing Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in taking Care of his Church, *viz.* the Purchase of his own Blood, by trying their Hearts and Reins. Well might holy *David* say,

*My Shepherd is the living Lord,
Nothing therefore I need;
In Pastures fair, near pleasant Streams,
He setteth me to feed.*

*He shall convert and glad my Soul,
And bring my Mind in Frame,
To walk in Paths of Righteousness,
For his most holy Name.*

*And when I find myself near lost,
Then doth he me Home take;
Conducting me in his right Paths,
Ev'n for his own Name's sake.*

*And finally, while Breath doth last,
Thy Grace shall me defend;
And in the House of God will I
My Life for ever spend.*

See *Psal.* xxiii. 1, 2, 3, 6.

Observe the Experience of holy *David*, and mark well the Confidence he had in the Faithfulness of God! And well might the four and twenty Elders in Heaven (the whole Church, figurately expressed by *Twenty four*, in Allusion to the *Twenty four Orders of Levites* under the Law, *1 Cron.* xxiv. 4, &c.) fall down before the Lamb which had been slain, and sing a new Song, saying, "Thou art worthy

worthy to take the Book, and to open the seven Seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, Tongue, and People, and Nation," *Rev.* v. 8, 9. Therefore holy brethren, Partakers of the heavenly Calling, let us rejoice; that is, praise the Lord that Christ was the Lamb slain for us from the Foundation of the World; and our Names written in the Book of Life, in order that we might not worship the Beast, *Rev.* xiii. 8. But worship him who died for our Sins, and was raised again for our Justification, *Rom.* iv. 25. Who saved us, and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the World began, *2 Tim.* i. 9. "For before the Mountains were settled, while as yet God had not made the Earth, when he prepared the Heavens; Christ being designed in the eternal Decree, was familiar to his Thoughts, as one brought up with him, and was daily his Delight, rejoicing always before him, rejoicing in the habitable Part of his Earth, (for God calleth the Things that are not as though they were) and his Delights were with the Sons of Men," *Prov.* viii. 25, 26, 27, 30, 31. Here we might observe the Heart of Christ was with his People, *viz.* his Elect, whom he was to redeem with his own precious Blood, even before *Adam* was created. And when *Adam* was fallen, we find the Redeemer was ready to do his Father's Will, *viz.* To bruise the Serpent's Head, *Gen.* iii. 15. For in the Volume of the Book it is written of Christ, Lo! I come, I delight to do thy Will, O God, *Psal.* xl. 7, 8. And he saw the Travail of his Soul, and was satisfied, *Isa.* liii. 11. *viz.* To lay down his Life for his Sheep; "Which Sheep shall hear my Voice, saith Christ, and I know them,

them, and they follow me (*i. e.* in the Regeneration, being effectually called from the Ways of Sin) and I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hands," *John* x. 11, 27, 28. Therefore let all true Believers stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, never to be entangled any more in the Sin of Unbelief, which will bring them into Bondage, *Gal.* v. 1. For it is by Faith we stand, *1 Cor.* i. 24. God the Father, Son and Spirit, having loved his Chosen from Eternity, will love them to Eternity in the Man Christ Jesus. "I have loved thee (*viz.* the Bride) saith God, with an everlasting Love; therefore, with Loving-kindness have I drawn thee," *Jer.* xxxi. 3. And whereas Christ says that no Man can come unto him, unless the Father draweth him, *John* vi. 44. Therefore God the Father draweth the Bride to his Son, either at the Third, Sixth, Ninth, or Eleventh Hour; in the Morning, Mid, or Eve of Life, *Matt.* xx. 1, &c. And presents her by his Spirit, in her Blood and Filthiness, unwashed and uncleansed, as a fit Object of his Mercy and Compassion: The Son receives her into the Arms of his Love and everlasting Favour; and saith, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own Will, but the Will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's Will, which sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose Nothing, but should raise it up again at the last Day. And that every one that seeth the Son by Faith, and believeth on him may have everlasting Life," *John* vi. 37, 38, 39, 40. The Holy Ghost, by divine Influence, in due Time ties the indissoluble Knot, which is effected by the inward Unction or Anointing

ing of the Holy Spirit (the breathing Winds) which separate the Bride from the World, Flesh, and Devil, and also from Self and Self-righteousness, and joins her to her everlasting unchangeable Bridegroom, *JESUS of Nazareth*, who came to allure, seek and save her by his Blood, who before was lost, *Matt. xviii. 11.* And as the Holy Ghost overshadowed the Virgin *Mary*, and begat in her the holy *JESUS*, *Luke i. 35.* So must the Holy Ghost overshadow, operate and inspire the Hearts of all others that receive the Royal Seed, and who are begotten again to a lively Hope; or else Christ can never be formed in them, the Hope of Glory, *Col. i. 27.* Neither will they cry out like holy *David*, "My Heart and Flesh rejoice in the living God," *Psal. lxxxiv. 2.* And our Lord saith to his Disciples, that the Holy Ghost should not only be with them (to overshadow them, as a transient Guest) but dwell in them, *John xiv. 17.* Whose Anointing was to abide in them for ever, *1 John ii. 27.* And thus Christ by assuming their Flesh, and giving them his Spirit, hath and doth establish sure Ground of Relation-ship between him and his People in every Branch of real Kindred: For which Reason he is not ashamed to call them Brethren, *Heb. ii. 11.* For he saith, *Thy Maker is thy Husband*, *Isa. liv. 5.* And now being betrothed unto Christ, they have known the Lord, *i. e.* experienced his Love, *Hof. ii. 20.* Hence it is that the Spouse in Consequence of this spiritual Marriage, cries out in holy Extacies of Joy, saying, "A Bundle of Myrrh is my Well-beloved unto me, he shall lie all Night betwixt my Breasts," *i. e.* in my Heart: To cause our Nuptial Bed to be green and fruitful, *Cant. i. 13, 16.* She is now a Member of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones, in a spiritual Sense. And although this great Mytery may seem
incredible

incredible and impossible to Unbelievers, yet it is really so with regard to Christ and the (true) Church, *Eph. v. 30, 32.* For as God caused a deep Sleep to fall upon the first *Adam*, and then took a Rib from his Side, of which he made him a Wife, and brought her unto him: "And *Adam* said, This is now Bone of my Bone, and Flesh of my Flesh, she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man," *Gen. ii. 21, 22, 23.* So God, according to his eternal Counsel caused a deep Sleep to fall on Christ, the second *Adam* on the Cross, and then cut open his Side, by the Hand of a Soldier, as was foretold, *Zech. xiii. 10.* For saith God, "Awake, O Sword, against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord," *Zech. xiii. 7.* Then one of the Soldiers with his Spear pierced his precious Side, and forthwith came thereout Blood and Water, *John xix. 34.* Of which mysterious Spring proceeds a numerous Race of new Creatures, who are the Children of the Promise, taught to believe in Christ, as the atoning Sacrifice, and the cleansing Laver; which brings Peace to the Conscience, and Purity to the Soul. The Spirit which reveals him, influencing the Heart to love him, and forsaking all others, to become the Lamb's Wife, *Rev. xix. 7.* willing henceforth to honour and obey him, whose Yoke is easy, and his Burden light. And this divine uniting Love constitutes the new Creature in Christ, without which all Religion is vain: for in Christ Jesus, neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision availeth any Thing, but a new Creature; and as many as walk according to this Rule of Salvation by Grace, Peace be on them, and Mercy, and upon the *Israel* of God, *Gal. vi. 15, 16.* God, having created the Bride, now opens the Eyes of her Understanding, and sheweth her that without the Shedding of (her

O

Husband

Husband's) Blood there could be no Remission (of her Sins) *Heb. ix. 22.* And that she was bought with a Price, and therefore ought to glorify God with Soul and Body, which are God's, *1 Cor. vi. 20.* Likewise that the Blood of Christ cleanseth the believing Soul from all Sin, *1 John i. 7.* Also that God can be just, and righteous, as well as merciful in justifying her Soul, by the Obedience and Sufferings of Jesus, *Rom. iii. 26.* And now she being cut off from her own Righteousness, *viz.* the wild Olive-tree by Nature, and ingrafted into Christ, the good Olive-tree by Grace, *Rom. xi. 17.* Every high and lofty Look is now brought low; and the crooked Paths made straight; and rough Ways smooth, *Luke iii. 5.* Now hath God made Peace with her Soul through the Blood of the Cross, by the suffering Body of his Flesh, through Death, to present her ever unblameable in his Sight, *Col. i. 20, 22.* And now in the most profound Humility, she often looks on him, who, for her Sins was pierced, and mourneth in the Bitterness of her Soul, that she was the Cause of Crucifying her beloved Lord, *Zech. xii. 10.* Here the Holy Ghost insensibly mollifies her Heart, and engraves thereon her Husband's Name, which is Love, whereby she begins to know him, and grieves as it were to Death over her suffering Redeemer. And so she travaileth, she groaneth, and is in Pain, praying for compleat Deliverance from the Burden of Sin, while Christ is formed in her, *Rom. viii. 22. Gal. iv. 19.* Here she dieth unto Sin, by having an Eye to the bloody Cross; she hears his Groans by Faith, and feeds on the Merits of his Death, and views him that came by Water and Blood for her Sanctification and Justification, *1 John v. 6.* For being justified by his Blood, we shall be saved from Wrath through him, *Rom. v. 9.* For by his Knowledge

peculiar Treasure, *Psal.* cxxxv. 4. My Heritage, saith God, is unto me as a speckled Bird, and the speckled Bird (the true Church) being adopted into God's Family; therefore the Birds round about are against her, *Jer.* xii. 9. And the Bride, being spiritually produced of the Essence of Christ's Blood (as *Adam* called his Wife, Woman), therefore, holy Men of old, being moved by the Holy Ghost, called the Bride of Christ, a Christian (or one anointed) The Holy Ghost honoured the Disciples with Christ's venerable Name, and called them Christians first at *Antioch*, *Act.* xi. 26. God the Father now views his Son's Bride with great Complacency, she being all glorious within (Christ dwelling in her Heart by Faith) and she panting for Holiness, crieth like God's Elect Day and Night, and prayeth with great Vehemency, saying, "Teach me, O Lord! the Way of thy Statutes, and I shall keep it unto the End. Give me Understanding, and I shall keep thy Law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole Heart. Make me to go in the Path of thy Commandments; for therein is my Desire," *Psal.* cxix. 33, 34, 35. Forasmuch as the Eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous, and his Ears open to their Prayers, *1 Peter* iii. 12. He immediately answereth her Requests, and instructeth her in the School of Christ, directing her "As she received Christ Jesus the Lord, at first, so to walk in him," *Col.* ii. 6. "Looking unto him, who was the Author, and will be the Finisher of her Faith," *Heb.* xii. 2. "Look unto me (saith Christ) all the Ends of the Earth, and be saved," *Isa.* xlv. 22. "And as *Moses* lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life," *John* iii. 14, 15. Thus by looking on him through Faith, having an Eye

to the Merits of his Sufferings on the Cross, the Vail of Legality is taken away. And all Believers in a Measure, with open Face, beholding as in a Gospel-glass, the Glory of the Lord, in the Face of Jesus Christ; are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, by the Spirit of the Lord, *2 Cor. iii. 18.* which is a Spirit of Love and Praise. "Whofo offereth me Praise (saith God) glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his Conversation aright, I will shew the Salvation of God," *Psal. 123.* The Bride having received the Answer of her Prayer, and God's Promise made good, wherein he saith, "Before she (the Church) calleth, I will answer, and whilst she is yet speaking, I will hear," *Isa. lxxv. 24.* For he answers the Cries of his own Spirit, who searcheth the Heart; and according to the Will of God, maketh Intercession for the Saints with Groanings which (in the extensive Manner they are conceived) cannot be uttered, *Rom. viii. 26, 27.* And the Bride, being united to Christ, (the Elect of God) in whom his Soul delighteth, *Isa. xlii. 1.* is made comely, through his Comeliness, and acceptable in him, *Ezek. xvi. 14.* She being now all glorious within, and her Clothing is of wrought Gold, *Psal. xlv. 13.* She, having put on the Lord Jesus by Faith, can through Peace and Joy in believing, live happy without the sinful Gratifications of the Flesh, *Rom. xiii. 14.* All Christ's Righteousness, from his Birth to his Death, she puts on as her own. He is called *The Lord our Righteousness*, *Jer. xxiii. 6.* and *Jerusalem*, (the Church) *The City of the great King*, has the Honour of bearing his Name, *Jer. xxxiii. 16.* being the Place of his Residence, and himself the Bride's Habitation, *Psal. xc. 1.* and *xc. 9.* She being now clothed with the Ornaments of Salvation, the Bride's Wedding-Dress, the beautiful Garments which she

is

is directed to put on, *Isa.* lii. 1. (For unto her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine Linen, clean and white, which is the Righteousness of the Saints, *Rev.* xix. 8. And in this Dress worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness, *Psal.* xxix. 2.) God the Father, the King of Glory, now viewing his Daughter, his Son's Bride, all glorious within, and her Clothing, being fine Linen wrought in Gold, fixeth his Love on her, and invites her to take a Tour, and view her immense Kingdom, by walking about *Sion*, and going round about her, telling the Towers thereof. She is desired to mark well her Bulwarks (or Places of Defence) and consider her Palaces. Also God the Father would not have her be ignorant of her Privilege, which she hath gained by her late Marriage to his Son. He orders her to rejoice with the Church, and be glad because of God's Judgments on her Enemies; telling of her glorious Match to succeeding Generations, *viz.* that this Faithful God will be her Guide unto Death, *Psal.* xlviii. 11, 12, 13, 14. And what is it to walk round about *Sion*? but to walk by Faith, and view all the precious Promises God has made to his Church or Bride, from the Beginning of *Genesis* to the End of *Revelations*. These are the stately Towers, built by the high and lofty one that inhabiteth Eternity, for the Safety and Comfort of his Son's Bride. Tell her Towers, saith God, number them, for they are all to Believers in Christ, *Yea*, and *Amen*; that is, sure and everlasting to the Glory of the unchangeable God the Father, *2 Cor.* i. 20. All Privileges, Gifts, and Graces belong to the Bride, "whether *Paul*, or *Apollos*, or *Cephas*, or the World, or Things present, or Things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's, *1 Cor.* iii. 21, 22, 23. God, having convinced her of his Faithfulness

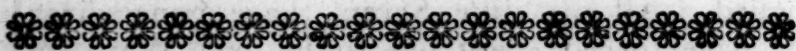
fulness to her Soul; orders the Bride to sing a new Song of Triumph, in Praise to his glorious Name: and be telling of his Salvation (by Christ) from Day to Day. And declare his Honour unto the Unconverted; viz. That faithful is he that hath promised, and that he will bring safe to Glory, every Soul who is enabled through Grace, and made willing to be married to Christ, *Psal.* xcvi. 1, 2, 3. And that she might see herself safe in the Marriage-Covenant, God gives his Word, his Oath, and Honour, as a Pledge for her Safety: For, saith God, "I will be as a Wall of Fire round about her, and will be the Glory in the Midst of her," *Zeck.* ii. 5. And all Believers having experienced the Truth boldly reply, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Merits of my Lord Jesus Christ," *Gal.* vi. 14. For all Believers are crucified to the World, and dead to the Law, according to the Measure of their Faith: therefore they adopt the Language of the Apostle, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord," *2 Cor.* x. 17. and subscribe to the Words of the Prophet, "Let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom, let not the mighty Man glory in his Might, nor let the rich Man glory in his Riches: but let him that glorieth, glory in this, (viz.) that through my Grace he understandeth and knoweth me, saith the Lord," *Jer.* ix. 23, 24. For I delight to shew Kindness to my Son's Bride: and it is my good Pleasure to give her the Kingdom, *Luke* xii. 32. She is also desired to mark well *Sion's* Bulwarks, viz. God's eternal Decrees, for now her Faith is increased, she might venture to read them. "For the Secrets of the Lord are with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant," *Psal.* xxv. 14. Which Covenant is made with Christ, whom God hath given the Church to perform (in her

her Stead) all the good Pleasure of his Will, *Isa.* xlii. 6. And for his Sake alone, God hath predestinated and adopted the Bride into his Family, that she might praise the Glory of his Grace, which hath made her accepted in the Beloved, *Eph.* i. 5, 6. For it is a Covenant of everlasting Peace, that never shall be removed to all Eternity, *Isa.* liv. 10. And as *David* said, so might every Believer say, Although Sense might lose at Times the Presence of God, yet he hath made with me (in Christ before Time began) an everlasting Covenant, well ordered in all Things, and sure. Which Covenant I trust in for all my Salvation, and desire no other, *2 Sam.* xxiii. 5. Great Reason had *David* then to trust in this Covenant, when God had sworn by his Holiness, that he would not fail or lie unto him, *Psal.* lxxxix. 34. The same Reason hath every Believer to apply God's Oath to himself, which is evident from God's Word, as follows, *viz.* "Incline your Ear and come unto me, hear and your Soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure Mercies of *David*," *Isa.* lv. 3. And again, "I the Lord have called thee (*viz.* Christ) in Righteousness, and will hold thy Hand, and will keep thee, and will give thee for a Covenant of the People, for a Light of the *Gentiles*: To open their blind Eyes, to bring out the Prisoners from their Prison-house of Sin and Unbelief; that they who sat in Darkness, might see a great Light (through believing) That they might glorify my Name, for giving them my Son, to redeem their precious immortal Souls. For my Glory will I not give to another, neither my Praise to Men's graven Image-Righteousness," *Isa.* xlii. 6, 7, 8. "Now unto us (the Church) a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be on his Shoulder; and his Name shall be called, Wonderful,

Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the Increase of his Government there shall be no End, to establish it with Judgment and Justice, from hence forth even for ever. The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this," *Isa. ix. 6, 7.* And this Child, God hath made Sin (or a Sin-offering) for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him, *2 Cor. v. 21.* "For he was wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for our Iniquities, the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and with his Stripes we are healed. All we, like Sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own Way; and the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and afflicted, and brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and opened not his Mouth. He was taken from Prison, and from Judgment," condemned without Fault, and then cut off out of the Land of the Living, for the Transgressions of his People. For it pleased the Lord to make his Soul an Offering for Sin, that his Seed might be justified (*viz.* true Believers) and the Pleasure of the Lord prosper in his Hands. And Christ himself foresaw the Agony of his Soul, yet was satisfied to die, to justify many: He laid down his Life for his Sheep, and bare their Iniquities; and interceded for the Transgressors, *Isa. liii. 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12.*

O Lord our God, grant that we might esteem the invaluable Blood which was shed by our adorable Redeemer in his last Combat with the Powers of Darkness, and daily view him in his Agony and bloody Sweat, under the Wine-Press of God's Wrath. Also when he suffered the cruel Scourging in Pilate's Hall, when he gave his Back to the Smilers, and at last his Life a
P Ransom

Ransom for our Sins on the Cross. May our Lord's sufferings by gaining the Bloody Victory, excite all his faithful Followers to renounce all sinful Pleasures here below, and count them but Dross for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ. May all who are become the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, aspire after higher Enjoyments, such as eating the delicious hidden Manna, the Consolation of the White Stone, and the Honour of sitting with Christ in his Throne, even as he is sat down with his Father in his Throne, Rev. iii. 21.



S E C T. VII.

God's everlasting Love to the Church. His Covenant of Grace with CHRIST in her Behalf. And his eternal Decree to save her before the Foundation of the World.

BEhold! now I shall endeavour to set forth the Covenant ordained betwixt the Father and the Son, no Doubt before Time began; as appears from the Words spoken under the Character of Wisdom, "The Lord possessed me in the Beginning of his Way, before his Works of old. I was set up from Everlasting, from the Beginning, or ever the Earth was. While as yet he had not made the Earth. Then was I by him, as one brought up with him, and was daily his Delight, rejoicing always before him. Rejoicing in the habitable Part of his Earth, and my Delights were with the Sons of Men," *Prov. viii. 22 — 31.* God calleth those Things that are not, as though they were,
Rom.

Rom. iv. 17. He foresaw the Fall of Man, and no Doubt, appointed the Means of his Recovery. Man being fallen in God's Account before he existed, and ruined himself and his Offspring. We may suppose, to illustrate the Point in Hand, that a Question was asked in Heaven, *viz.* Forasmuch as Man had foolishly sold himself for Nought, how was it possible that he could be redeemed without Money, (or Price from fallen Man) and God's Justice suffer no Wrong? *Isa.* lii. 3. We'll suppose the mysterious Question was astonishing to Angels, who all stood silent in the Court of Heaven, when the eternal Father, who knew what he intended to do, unfolded the grand Mystery of Christ's coming into the World, the Son of God to die for Man; that he should assume our Nature in the Virgin's Womb, to be qualified for the important Trust, *Rom.* ix. 5. and fulfil the Father's righteous Laws in our Stead, *Mat.* v. 17. and suffer Death for our Disobedience, *viz.* The Just for the Unjust, that he might lawfully bring lost Souls home unto God, *1 Peter* iii. 8. And God's Justice suffer no Wrong: that God might be just, and the Justifier of all who through Grace believe in the Merits of Jesus, *Rom.* iii. 26. And their Faith (not the Act of Believing, but the Object believed in) shall be imputed unto them for Righteousness, *Rom.* iv. 22. And in Consequence of his becoming Man, and humbling himself to the Death of the Cross, *Pbil.* ii. 8. God the Father covenants with his Son, saying, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for thy Possession," *Psal.* ii. 8. "Thy Dominion also shall be from Sea to Sea, and from the River unto the Ends of the Earth," *Psal.* lxxii. 8. "For the Earth is mine, and the Fulness thereof; yea, the World,

and all they that dwell therein," *Psal.* xxiv. 1. Out of which a Seed shall serve thee, and it shall be accounted unto the Lord for a Generation, *Psal.* xxii. 30. (Thus were we "chosen in Christ before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy and without Blame before him in Love," *Eph.* i. 4. On this Account, Jesus said to his Disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should bring forth Fruit, even Fruit that should remain," *John* xv. 16.) And this Generation of chosen People, shall from Age to Age, through Faith in the Blood of the Covenant, be imputed Righteous, *Gen.* xv. 6. and shall be always accepted in Christ the Beloved, *Eph.* i. 6. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works," *Tit.* ii. 14. "But in his Righteousness shall they make their Boast; He is the Glory of their Strength, and in his Favour they shall lift up their Horn," *Psal.* lxxxix. 16, 17. And at length they shall sing a loud Song in Heaven, with sweet Melody, when Time shall be no more; saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing," *Rev.* v. 12. "Who hath redeemed us unto God by his Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation," *ver.* 9. With what unspeakable Joy will the dear Emmanuel rejoice over his Bride, when she appears in his Presence, clothed in her beautiful Garments, the fine Linen, which is the Righteousness of the Saints? *Rev.* xix. 8. And her Beauty made perfect through his Comeliness, *Ezek.* xvi. 14. O! how gloriously is the Church described when entered on her triumphant State! Made up of a great Multitude which no Man can number,

number, out of all Nations, Kindreds, People and Tongues, standing before the Throne of God, and before the Lamb, clothed with white Robes, and Palms (the Emblem of Victory) in their Hands, ascribing Salvation unto God which sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the Angels stood round about the Throne, and about the Elders, encircling the whole Choir. And both Saints and Angels, united in the same solemn Worship, fell before the Throne on their Faces, in Token of Reverence and Homage, saying, "Amen, Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, be unto our God, for ever and ever, Amen." Thus the Son with great Delight views his dear-bought Church, who came out of great Tribulation, having washed their Robes, and made them white in his own Blood; joined in sweet Connection with the angelick Host, to praise God Day and Night, for ever and ever, in his holy Temple, *Rev. vii. 10, 11, 12, 14, 15.* Thus we find the Holy Ghost exhibits the State of the Church in her glorified Condition, in the new *Jerusalem*, the Church triumphant, *Rom. xix. 7.* in her full Dress, adorned as a Bride for the Bridegroom, *Rev. xxii. 1.* Of which blessed State Saint *John* speaks so familiarly and positively as if all the Redeemed were arrived thither, because they surely shall; Grace and Glory being one with God! Grace is the Bud, and Glory is the Fruit. But let us take a Review of the Church, and ourselves, originally: God regarded us in our low Estate; we'll suppose the Father saying, "Son, thy intended Bride is in Misery, but she must be redeemed by thy Blood, in order to be entitled to Heaven, and to be made meet for Glory above with thee: without shedding thy Blood there can be no Remission of her Sins, *Heb. ix. 22.* Neither will any other Sa-

crifice

crifice (which are only Types) be sufficient; *Levitical* Sacrifices being only Types and Shadows, but a Body have I prepared thee, *Heb. x. 5.* Likewise, all Power is given unto thee both in Heaven and in Earth, *Matt. xxviii. 18.* I'll judge no Man, but do hereby commit all Judgment unto thee my Son, and none shall receive Life eternal, but those that receive thee," *John v. 22.* Now the mysterious Son, God's equal Fellow, *Zech. xiii. 7.* In whom all the Fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily, *Col. ii. 9.* Knowing that his Father's Will was to redeem the Church, (said when he came upon Earth, "I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own Will, but the Will of him that sent me," *John vi. 38.* His saying in Time was the Index to discover the eternal Mind before Time began) He, I say, who is Almighty to deliver, immediately stood up, like a Giant refreshed with Wine, to smite his Enemies, *Psal. lxxviii. 65, 66.* and broke Silence in the Court of Heaven, saying, "Behold! I that speak in Righteousness am mighty to save my Bride: I'll travel in the greatness of my Strength on this important Errand, *Isa. lxiii. 1.* I have Power to lay down my Life to redeem her, and I have Power to take it again, having received this Commandment of my Father, *John x. 17, 18.* Therefore, Salvation being ensured by the eternal Compact, the Bride's Happiness is sure and certain; I am Alpha and Omega, (saith Christ) the Beginning and the End. I will give unto them that thirst after Righteousness to drink out of the Fountain of the Water of Life freely, *Rev. xxii. 13, 17.* There shall be a Fountain opened in my Side (springing from my Heart, in Consequence of my Incarnation) from whence shall issue Blood and Water, for their Justification, and Sanctification; in which my Bride shall wash away her Sins, and Uncleaness
 upon

upon Earth, *Zech. xiii. 1.* And I will allure her, and bring her up out of the Wilderness of Sin, and cause her to lean on me her Beloved, *Cant. viii. 5.* She shall understand by my written Word, that I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour. And that before the Day was, or Time began, I am he that covenanted with my Father, to satisfy Divine Justice in the Behalf of my Spouse. Also, as the Father hath loved me, even so have I loved her, *John xv. 9.* And there is none that can pluck her out of my Father's Hands, *John x. 29.* I will work out her Salvation, and none shall let it, *Isa. xliii. 11, 13.* Hereby I'll cause her to know that I have loved her with an everlasting Love, and therefore with Loving-kindness have I drawn her unto me, *Jer. xxxi. 3.* And this Knowledge of Faith shall so work by Love in her Heart, that it shall make her willing to part with all her sinful Pleasures, and impatiently desirous to crucify the Flesh on my Cross, 'till the whole Body of Sin (the old Man) is destroyed, *Rom. vi. 6.* So shall she put on me, the Lord Jesus, and make no Provision for the Flesh, to gratify the Lusts thereof, *Rom. xiii. 14.* Thus wearing my Righteousness, and cleansed by my Blood, having my Spirit of Love formed in her Heart, which shall be as a Well of living Water, springing up into everlasting Life, *John iv. 14.* Then shall she love the Lord her God with all her Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength, *Mark xii. 30.* and so be made meet for my Glory. And holy Father, my Will is that they whom thou hast given me, be where I am, to behold my Glory which I had with thee before the World was; neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in me through their Word. And the Glory which thou hast given me (as Son and Heir) I have given them, that they
may

may be one in us, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one (*i. e.* in God through Christ) and that the World may know that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me, for thou lovest me before the Foundation of the World. I have manifested thy Name unto the Men which thou gavest me out of the World; thine they were, and thou gavest them to me. I pray for them, I pray not for the World, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine, (by eternal Donation). And I am glorified in them, and now come I to thee, and these Things I speak in the World, that they might have my Joy fulfilled in them," *John xvii. 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 20, 22, 23, 24.* Here we might observe that our Saviour's Petitions in Time, were to strengthen the Faith of his People; for his Prayer was granted by the Father, and settled in Heaven from Eternity, *Psal. cxix. 8, 9.* We therefore, by Faith, may hear the Father's Answer, saying, "My well-beloved Son, all thy Petitions are granted, for it is also my good Pleasure to give them my Kingdom," *Luke xii. 32.* Now both Parties being agreed, all is Harmony and Love: the Council of Peace between the Father and the Son respecting Salvation, being ratified for ever. But the Covenant of Man's Redemption must be next recorded in the close Rolls of the Divine Decree; that contains Blessings bestowed on the Redeemed; this Price is to be paid by the Redeemer, which from Scripture Records we may collect as follows: whereas *Israel*, the Church, hath destroyed herself, therefore in God only her Help can be found, *Hos. xiii. 9.* Then the God-Man Christ Jesus fore-ordained, freely entered himself, and was inrolled as a Surety in the Behalf of his Church, to answer all the Demands of the divine Law

Law and Justice, consequently to make an Atone-
ment by Death, and therefore called, *The Lamb
slain* (or appointed to be slain) *from* (or before) *the
Foundation of the World*, Rev. xiii. 8. that he might
redeem his Bride from the Curse she had incurred
through breaking God's Law; being made a Curse
for her. For it is written, *Cursed is every one that
bangeth on a Tree*, Gal. iii. 13. The Prophet *David*
also speaking in the Person of Christ to God the
Father, saith, "Sacrifice and Burnt-offerings for
Sin thou didst not desire nor require (but as Types
of Christ the true Sacrifice) then said I (the Re-
deemer) Lo I come, as in the Volume of the Book
it is written of me: for I delight to do thy Will,
O God: yea thy Law is within my Heart," *Psal.*
xl. 6, 7, 8. Here holy *David* being inspired by the
Holy Ghost, referred the Church to the Original
Foundation of her Redemption, by Virtue of a
Covenant made between God the Father and God
the Son, and recorded in the great Volume or Book
of God's Decrees, before Time began. "For the
Secrets of the Lord are with them that fear him,
he will shew them his Covenant," *Psal.* xxv. 14.
It has been already observed that *Solomon* also by
Inspiration of the Holy Ghost spake of Christ's de-
lighting himself with the Sons of Men before the
World began, with those no Doubt whom the Fa-
ther had given him to redeem, *Prov.* viii. 31.
That the chosen Race was given him is manifest by
Christ's own Words, *viz.* "This is the Father's
Will that sent me, that of all which the Father hath
given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise
it up again at the last Day," *John* vi 30. Also St.
Paul referred the Church to this same Covenant,
between the Father and the Son, before Time be-
gan, which is evident as follows: "*Paul* a Servant
of God, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, according

to the Faith of God's Elect, and the acknowledging of the Truth which is after Godliness. In Hope of eternal Life, which God that cannot lie promised *before* the World began," *Tit.* i. 1, 2. To whom did God promise the Church eternal Life before the World began? *Answer.* To Christ, the federal Head of his Church, for Grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the World began, *2 Tim.* i. 9. The inspired Prophet also speaks as confidently as though he heard the Son say to the Father (when the Covenant was agreed to) "Thy dead Men, O Father, shall live, together with my dead Body shall they arise," *Isa.* xxvi. 19. They shall be quickened by Faith in the Blood of the Covenant, in this World, who were dead in Trespasses and Sins through the Fall, *Eph.* ii. 1. For by Virtue of this Covenant, God who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love's sake, wherewith he loved them before Time began, even although they were as dead to God in Sin, as was the dead Body of Christ in the Tomb: yet he quickened them, and Christ together (in Effect) when he arose from the Dead, for his Life was the Ground and Root of their Life, *Eph.* ii, 4, 5. And this was foretold by the Spirit of Prophecy, *viz.* Come, let us turn to the Lord by Repentance, for he hath torn us (in Christ our Head) and he will heal us, he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two Days will he revive us, in the third Day he will raise us up, and we shall live together (*viz.* Christ and his Members) in God's Sight, *Hos.* vi. i, 2. But why does God quicken some, and pass by others, leaving them in their Sins? Because he hath Mercy on whom he will, they shall certainly be quickened who belong to the Election of Grace, *Rom.* xi. 5. and to the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, whose Names are written or inrolled in Heaven,
Heb.

Heb. xii. 23. A Priviledge which ought to rejoice the Heart of God's People more than any other Gift or Grace. "Rejoice not (saith Jesus) that evil Spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice because your Names are written in Heaven," *Luke x. 20.* This, it seems they knew, otherwise they could not rejoice. It is a peculiar Knowledge, which God, through infinite Mercy by Christ Jesus, hath been graciously pleased to communicate to the true believing Church in all Ages. Holy *David* knew that in God's Book, all his Members were written, when as yet there was none of them, *Psal. cxxxix. 16.* And no Doubt but he saw his Name (through Faith) written in the Book of Life, when God set him up upon Christ the Rock, *Psal. xxvii. 5.* Saint *Paul* also when writing to a Minister at *Philippi*, to make up a Difference among the Brethren, seems to express his Love and Care for them, because their Names were written in the Book of Life; and on this Account (as Christ had done before) he bids them rejoice in the Lord, not in their Frames or Feelings, but in being the Beloved in Christ Jesus, *Phil. iv. 3, 4.* And chosen in him before the Foundation of the World, *Eph. i. 4.* The Knowledge of this, though not attained by every weak Believer, is attainable to all the People of God, who have received true Faith which works by Love, called *The Faith of God's Elect*, *Tit. i. 1.* who know the Truth which makes them free, *John viii. 32.* Having Christ in them the Hope of Glory, *Col. i. 27.* Enabling them by the Spirit of Adoption, to call God their *reconciled Father*; the Spirit itself bearing witness with their Spirits, that they are the Children of God, and Joint-heirs with Christ, *Rom. viii. 15, 16.* As it was prophesied that God's Chosen should receive the Knowledge of their Salvation by the Remission of their Sins,

Luke ii. 77. and overcome the World, and gain their Victory through Faith, *1 John v. 4.* And he that thus overcometh, Christ promiseth to give him the hidden Manna (inward Absolution) which none knoweth, but he that receiveth it, *Rev. ii. 17.* Thus by searching the Scripture, and by comparing them with their own Experience as some think, so others believe, they have eternal Life, *John v. 39.* Having through Grace given all Diligence to make their Calling and Election sure, *2 Peter i. 10.* They by Faith perceive their Names written in the Lamb's Book of Life, *Rev. xx. 15.* and can truly say by Heart-felt Experience, that God hath made Christ unto them Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, *1 Cor. i. 30.* And although the World by Wisdom knoweth not God, *1 Cor. i. 21.* Which makes the mourning Prophet ask, Who hath believed our Report, and to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed? For there is no Form nor Comeliness in Christ to the Sight of Unbelievers, neither do they desire him, *Isa. liii. 1, 2.* And they say (in their Hearts) unto God, *Depart from us, for we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways,* *Job xxi. 14.* (Therefore the Prayers specified and offered up to the Father by our adorable Redeemer are not pertinent, nor likely to be of Use to Unbelievers continuing such): yet to the believing Spouse he is the *chiefest among ten Thousand, and altogether lovely,* *Cant. v. 10, 16.* For he daily feeds her in his Garden of Grace with Milk and Honey, saying *Eat, O Friends, yea, drink abundantly, O Beloved,* *Cant. v. 1.* Therefore the Spouse, like the busy Bee, sucks Honey out of every Flower, *i. e.* improves by every Promise in holy Writ, and believeth the Words of her Redeemer, who positively declares, *All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me,* *John vi. 37.* And the inspired Prophet

phet foretold that Christ our High-priest would surely make his Words good when he arose from the Dead, and utter the following victorious Words (Having finished the Work God gave him to do; he ascended into Heaven, as the Fore-runner of his Church, and entered the Court of Heaven as a mighty Conqueror, with Trophies of Honour!) saying, (Holy Father) "Behold! here am I, and the Children thou hast given me to redeem," *Isa.* viii. 18. *Heb.* ii. 13, 14. But why should I enlarge? the Fall of Man, the effectual Working of Free Grace, and the Certainty of Salvation are proved.

I haste to conclude my Epistle (being much longer than first intended). We have found the whole House of *Israel* dead in the *Valley of dry Bones*, where *Adam's* Disobedience left them: and the chosen Race brought safe to Glory, through the Obedience and Sufferings of Christ the second *Adam*: For as in *Adam* all die, and are dead by Nature; even so in Christ shall all (the Faithful) be made alive by Grace, to live for ever, *1 Cor.* xv. 22. "For he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life: but he that believeth not on the Son, shall not see Life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him," *John* iii. 36. The Doctrine is evident; let the Reader or Hearer look to the Application. If any unexperienced or contentious Person, shall fret himself, and disapprove of the Doctrine, because it asserts he cannot quicken his own Soul, *Psal.* xxii. 29. And haughtily says; If the Scope and Substance of the foregoing Discourse be true; that God knew and pre-ordained all Things, why doth he yet find Fault? for who hath resisted his Will? What is the Use of Man's Endeavours and Care for his Soul? Saint *Paul* answers thus: "Who art thou that repliest against God, seeing he hath
Power

Power to make one Vessel to Honour, and another to Dishonour?" *Rom.* ix. 19, 20, 21. And does according to his Will both in the Armies of Heaven, and also among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can stay his Hand, or say, What doest thou?" *Dan.* iv. 35. And let the Objector consider, that notwithstanding all this, the Lord saith, "Strive to enter in at the strait Gate, (strive in the right Way) for many will seek to enter in (perhaps in their own Strength) and shall not be able," *Luke* xiii. 24. "For no Man that striveth for the Mastery over his Sins, will be ever crowned, except he striveth lawfully," *2 Tim.* ii. 5. Which must be done in the Strength of another; and like holy *David* say, "The Lord is my Strength, and my Song, who is likewise become my Salvation," *Psal.* cxviii. 14. Or like the penitent Prodigal, who seeing himself undone by his mad Career, and sinful Practice in Life, having lost his original Rectitude, and spiritual Senses by the Fall: But having thro' Mercy received a Grain of Faith, he came to himself, and humbly said, "I will arise and go to my Father, saying, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son, make me as one of thy hired Servants, lest I perish with Hunger." (Now let us view an humble Suppliant on his bended Knees, his penitential Tears flowing out, and his Hands lifted up to Heaven, craving Mercy of an offended Father. The Father being moved with Compassion, pardoned and embraced his returning Son. Thus they that sow in Tears shall reap in Joy, *Psal.* cxxvi. 5.) 'Till this is the Case, none of the Sons of *Adam* may expect from an offended God Remission of Sins, and heavenly Embraces, *Luke* xv. 16, 17, 18, 20. And whensoever this is the Case, the penitent Sinner ought to consider on what Account God hath been pleased

pleased to work a Change in his Heart; and adopt the Apostle's Words, applying them to himself, viz. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we say to these Things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" *Rom. viii. 29, 30, 31.* Hence the converted Sinner may learn that Salvation is by Grace (according to the determined Counsel of God) not of Works, lest any Man should boast, *Eph. ii. 8, 9.* And although by Nature, and previous to his effectual Calling by Grace, he was like a wild Ass's Colt, and would not be guided by the Word of God, *Job xi. 12.* Yet when Christ calls him by his Word and Spirit, and marks him with the Mark of his Sheep, of whom he says, "I know my Sheep, and am known of mine," *Ezek. ix. 4. John x. 14.* Then the Called of God hear and know the good Shepherd's Voice, and follow him, because he hath given them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, *ver. 27, 28.* But some, through Ignorance of the Life of Grace in their own Souls, may suppose that the Effect of full Assurance will be Sloth and Unfruitfulness in God's Vineyard: but it proves to be quite the Reverse, as appears in the Conduct of holy *David*; he knew himself in Favour with God, yet he prays God to wash him thoroughly from his Iniquity, and cleanse him from his Sins. Also, to 'create in him a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within him. And again, Cast me not away from thy Presence, saith he, nor take thy Holy Spirit from me, *Psal. li. 2, 10, 11.* Saint *Paul* also breathed in Prayer to God in like Manner, desiring to know Christ, and the Power of his Resurrection, and the Fellowship of his

his Sufferings, being made conformable unto his Death. Always pressing on towards the Mark, for the Prize of the High-calling of God in Christ Jesus, *Phil.* iii. 10, 14. Fighting the good Fight of Faith, laying hold on eternal Life, *1 Tim.* vi. 12. Though he suffered the Loss of all Things, yet he counted it but Dross and Dung, that he might win Christ, and be found in him, not having his own Righteousness, which is by the Law, or by his own Works, but the Righteousness of Christ through Faith, *Phil.* iii. 9. He was not ashamed of the Cross of Christ, for he knew that if he suffered with him, and for his Sake, he should also reign with him, *2 Tim.* ii. 12. For as the Faithful are Sons of God, and Joint-heirs with Christ, therefore, if they suffer for the Gospel's Sake, as Christ their elder Brother did; they shall be conformable to their Head, and be glorified together. Thus saith the Apostle, "I reckon that the Sufferings of this present Time (which are but for a Moment) are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us," *Rom.* viii. 17, 18. Thus the Faithful in all Ages, would, like *Moses*, "rather suffer Affliction with the People of God, than enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season; esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than all earthly Treasure, having an Eye to the Recompence of Reward," *Heb.* xi. 25, 26. And remembering the Price of their Redemption, being not redeemed with Silver or Gold, from their vain, worldly Conversation; but with the precious Blood of Christ, as a Lamb without Spot, who freely offered himself to God for them, according to the determinate Counsel of God, and his gracious Purpose, before the Foundation of the World, *1 Peter* i. 18, 19, 20. Here then is great Consolation and Joy to all true Believers, when they consider their high Privilege

above

above others, by being Disciples of Jesus Christ: Moreover, Assurance of Faith, and its good Effects, the Doctrine we plead for, is confirmed by what follows; "Unto you it is given (saith Christ) to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God: but unto them who are without (unconverted) all is in Parables, dark and obscure," *Mark* iv. 11. And this for want of an enlightened Understanding, and the Teaching of that blessed Spirit, who searcheth all Things, yea, the deep Things of God, *1 Cor.* ii. 10. But they who receive the Spirit of Adoption, and can call God their *reconciled Father*, can see themselves safe in the Covenant of Grace; as the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament abundantly teach. To instance in the former, we hear our Saviour speak in the *Canticles*, "A Garden inclosed is my Sister, my Spouse, a Spring shut up, a Fountain sealed." Here the Godly have the Pleasure of considering themselves as Trees of Myrrh planted by God's Right Hand in the Garden of Grace: and Christ as the Fountain of Life, in the Presence of God in Heaven, continually flowing and watering them with Showers of spiritual Blessings, Pardon and Peace, Mercy and Grace, *Cant.* iv. 12, 14, 16. Therefore they who have received the Life of Faith in their Souls, are no longer idle Loiterers in the Market-place, but *Labourers*, yea, *Workers* together with God, in his Vineyard; and at the Close of the Day shall receive Wages, viz. the End of their Faith, the Salvation of their Souls, *Matt.* xx. 3, 7, 9. Hence it is evident that the Love of Christ constraineth his chosen Servants to Obedience of Heart and Life, because they know they were once dead in Sin, but now through Faith in him, they are alive unto God. Therefore from henceforth they desire to know no Man after the Flesh. For old Things are done away, and all

R

Things

Things are become new: new Companions, new Conversation, new Peace and Joy in believing, 2 Cor. v. 14, 16, 17. Consequently the Desire of their Heart is towards him, and they cry out with the Spouse, to him whom their Soul loveth; "Where dost thou make thy Flock to rest at Noon?" not only from *Sinai's* Thunder, and the Curses on Mount *Ebal*, but from the Frowns and Sneers of the ungodly World, the Deceit of Sin, and the Snares of the Devil. "For why should I turn aside from the Flocks of thy Companions?" Cant. i. 7. Thus by Faith they offer unto the Lord, like *Abel*, a Free-will Offering, more excellent than *Cain*, or the faithless Generation, *Heb. xi. 4.* But the Unconverted, not having tasted that the Lord is gracious, 1 *Peter ii. 3.* nor received a Testimony that they are in the Covenant of Grace, and the Objects of divine Love; they generally murmur, and stigmatize the Doctrine of Predestination, and say, "It brings Dishonour to God, by making him the Author of Sin: which malicious Charge is false and blasphemous! may we convince such by the Armour of Righteousness and the Word of Truth. God made Man upright at first, and having pronounced him very good, appointed him Lord of the Creation; and placed him in the Garden of *Eden*. And the Lord commanded the Man, saying, "Of every Tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the Day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," *Gen. ii. 16, 17.* *Adam* was now a free Agent, and had Power to obey his Maker's Will; the Devil could not ruin him without his Consent: and although God knew he would fall, yet God laid no Constraint on him to disobey, nor infused evil Habits into him, God can not tempt to evil. But Satan envied Man's

Man's Happiness, and beguiled *Eve*, and *Adam* hearkened to the Voice of his Wife, and then eat of the forbidden Fruit; which ruined himself, and his Posterity for ever. So here we find that the Devil, who rebelled in Heaven, and caused War there, was the first moving Cause of Man's Disobedience in Paradise. And therefore Satan is the Author of Sin, and God is justified in his Sayings, and overcomes when he is judged, *Rom. iii. 4.* God declares himself a SAVIOUR, but proves Men guilty of their own Destruction. "O *Israel!* thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy Help," *Isa. xlv. 21. Hos. xiii. 9.* "Thou hast sold thyself (to be a Bond-slave to the Devil, &c.) for nought, but thou shalt be redeemed without Money;" thy Poverty shall not debar thee from Salvation, *Isa. lii. 3.* God in Christ is the Author of *eternal Life*, unto all them that obey (or submit to believe in) him, *Heb. v. 9.* Christ himself saith, "The Son of Man came not to destroy, but to save," *Luke ix. 56.* And whereas "out of the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every Word must be established," *Matt. xviii. 16.* "Therefore let God be true, and every (contentious) Man a Liar," *Rom. iii. 4.*

WE thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, for disclosing thy Will to thy Church below, informing us, that whatsoever Things are revealed in holy Scripture belong to us and to our Children for ever, but secret Things belong to God, Deut. xxix. 29. Grant, O Lord, that what has been proved by the Authority of thy holy Word, might be blessed to thy People; and strengthen the Faith of thine Elect, that they might walk more comfortably through this Valley of Tears. And may we all through Faith join with Saint Paul, and say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all

spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him, before the Foundation of the World; that we should be holy, and without Blame before him in Love," Amen, Eph. i. 3, 4.



S E C T. VIII.

Good Works, which are the Fruits of Faith, are acceptable to God; but Works done before Faith are not pleasant unto him. The true Church judgeth the Wicked on Earth. A variety of Diversions, which the World call innocent Pleasure, but the Scriptures call it Vice, and as such it will be proved in the Day of Judgment.

LET us next observe, that unconverted Men, attending to human Reason, and adhering to natural Religion, do suppose and believe that Men are and ought to be saved by their own good Works. Such Doctrine might be orthodox before Adam fell, but since, it is antichristian. And revealed Religion by Scripture teaches us better, and shews us a more excellent Way. "By Grace are we saved, through Faith (saith the Scripture) and that not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God: not of Works, lest any Man should boast," *Eph. ii. 8, 9.* And whereas Faith is the Gift of God; without Faith it is impossible to please him, *Heb. xi. 6.* "For whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin," *Rom. xiv. 23.* Faith looks to Christ, and in him, Persons and Performances are accepted: therefore good Works
which

which are the Fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot be performed by an unregenerated Man, not justified by Faith, and therefore, not at Peace with God, *Rom. v. 1.* And consequently his best Works are not acceptable to God, (as all the good Works of the Faithful are) neither can they save his Soul, or administer true Comfort in a Day of Trouble. But good Works which are acceptable to God, and follow after Justification, are the Fruits of that Faith which is given by the Holy Ghost, when the Soul is first quickened and made alive unto Salvation, *Gal. v. 22.* And, although, Men are not to be saved by their Works; as the Apostle says, "By the Works of the Law no Flesh can be justified," *Gal. ii. 16.* yet, shall Men be judged according to their Works, *Rev. xx. 13.* And all those who through Faith have done good Works from a Principle of Love to Christ, and to promote his Glory on Earth, will be approved by him as meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, *Col. i. 12.* Therefore they having done good, shall go into everlasting Life, *John v. 29.* While the Fearful and Unbelieving, who are afraid of the Cross, though they have done many good Works in the Sight of Men; yet it being for sinister Ends, like theirs who said, "Wherefore have we fasted, and thou takest no Notice of us," *Isa. lviii. 3.* They expected to be rewarded for what they did; or dreaded Punishment in case of Neglect: therefore, their Works, though good and commendable in themselves, yet being done in a legal Spirit, or through slavish Fear, will not be accepted of God, for want of Faith. And such Men, not being justified, nor sanctified, shall consequently be sentenced by the Judge of the Whole Earth, as unmeet and unworthy to partake of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, who are sanctified through Faith

in

in Christ Jesus, *Act. xxvi. 18.* And therefore must have their Portion in the Lake of Fire and second Death, *Rev. xxi. 18.* And a natural Man, by arguing that he might be saved by the Light of Nature, if industriously improved, without the Teaching of the Spirit, or Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, betrays his own Ignorance, and proves that he never had any divine Revelation, as a Love-Token from God: and therefore understandeth not spiritual Things, they being spiritually discerned, *1 Cor. ii. 14.* This I know by Experience, as soon as the Spirit of Truth convinces of Sin, (which lies in the Heart of every Unbeliever) Men immediately strive to keep the whole Law of God as a Condition of Life; but they strive in vain, their *Babel* Tower, or their Wall with untempered Mortar shall fall; they may endeavour to believe also, but still miscarry, for Man can no more believe (without Inspiration) than he can reach the Stars. They may betake themselves to Prayer, pray oft, pray long, and pray fervent, and yet Guilt remains, 'till at length their Strength and Heart fail, and they begin to sink into Despair. Such was my Case, and then in the Depth of Misery was obliged to cry for God's Mercy, Deep calling to Deep, I was convinced of my Weakness and Ignorance, and saw by God's Word that to be carnally minded was Death; but to be spiritually minded was Life and Peace, *Rom. viii. 6.* And I being carnal, and the Law of God spiritual; I therefore could see no Way to escape the Damnation of Hell: 'till, in the Midst of my very great Extremity, the Lord was pleased to make it his Opportunity, and breathed on my dead Soul, and comforted me by revealing his Son in my Heart, *Gal. i. 16.* And by beholding him to be a compleat Saviour, I began to entertain the Hope of Glory, *Col. i. 27.* Know therefore that
the

the lofty Looks of Man must be brought low, his imaginary Strength and Free-will Notions discarded, and his proud Heart sink, so far at least as to have no Confidence in the Flesh, before God will reveal Salvation through the Death of Christ to his immortal Soul. Then shall the Scripture be fulfilled; "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that Day. Christ crucified shall be exalted, as *Moses* lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, and then Man shall cast his own Idols or Fig-leaf Righteousness to the Moles and to the Bats," *Isa.* ii. 11, 12, 17, 18, 20. And in Order that Man might worship no more Idols, *viz.* The Works of his own Hands, then all Believers shall with Comfort remember Christ the Rock, from whence they were hewn, and consider that all God's Promises to them in him are. *Yea* and *Amen*; and with grateful Hearts reflect on the Hole of the Pit, or deep Despair from whence, through his Grace, they were digged, and brought into the Knowledge of God, *Isa.* li. 1. This Consideration hath a Tendency to humble the proud Heart, and keep down spiritual Pride, and agreeable to the Exhortation of the Apostle, as we received Christ Jesus the Lord, in a Spirit of Humility and Self-denial at first, so to walk in him, *Col.* ii. 6. God doth not find Men holy, but calls them to be holy, as *Abraham* was called by God when he was an Idolater, and polluted in his Sin, to believe in Christ, who was to come to save Sinners, and he saw his Day, and was glad, *John* viii. 56. In a similar State did God find all his chosen People, *Ezek.* xvi. 3, 6. And all the spiritual Seed of *Abraham* are called by God from Idolatry, or Worshiping their own Works, to see Christ's Day, and to receive free Salvation through his Blood and Righteousness. For as the Spirit of God enlightened *Abraham* to
see

see Christ's Day; so doth the Spirit of Christ, as a Day-Star, arise in every Believer's Heart, *2 Peter* i. 19. And then, through Faith, he is blessed with faithful *Abraham*, *Gal.* iii. 9. Thus, the great Father of the Universe, daily saith "to the North, Give up; and to the South, Keep not back: bring my Sons from far, and my Daughters from the Ends of the Earth; for I have created them for my Glory," *Isa.* xliii. 6, 7. But when God creates a dead Soul a-new in Christ Jesus, and translates him from the State of Nature into the Kingdom of Grace; which indeed is Glory in the Bud. When the Life of God is infused into a despairing Sinner's Soul; who can comprehend the Length, and Breadth, the Depth, and Height of the Love of Christ, that passeth Knowledge: and who can express what the Soul feels when filled with the Fullness of God? *Eph.* iii. 18, 19. Well might Christ say to such a Soul, that the Kingdom of Heaven is within him, *Luke* xvii. 21. And well might Christ call it the *bidden Manna*, which none knoweth but him that receiveth it, *Rev.* ii. 17. And, well might the blessed Spouse cry out in holy Extasy that "the Love of Christ is better than Wine," *Cant.* i. 2. And this Love of God shed abroad in the Soul, is what Saint *Paul* looks upon to be a more excellent Way to Heaven than any other Gift God has bestowed on the Church; which he calls Charity; *i. e.* Love, or the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, who delighteth to instruct poor Pilgrims in the Path of Life, being first awakened by the Spirit of Truth, *Job.* xvi. 8. So do all experienced Christians desire to leave their Testimony behind them for the same Purpose. We know that Love is the most superior and conquering Grace, infused by Degrees into a convinced, convicted, and self-condemned Heart; by the Holy Ghost, who
 knock-

knocketh at the Door of a distressed Soul, to let the King of Glory in. But this divine Ray of Light and Love is often at first so weak, that Satan almost quenches it through Unbelief, and holds a Contest with the Holy Spirit in some of God's People for many Years, and keeps the Soul in Bondage. At other Times it is the Lord's Pleasure to conquer Satan, and cast him out in one Day, as was the Case with *Zaccheus*, Luke xix. 8, 9. But in general the Holy Spirit gains the Heart by Degrees, by infusing a greater Measure of Light and Love into the Distressed: and knocks more earnestly, intreating the Soul to open the everlasting Doors to let the King of Glory in. The poor Soul fearing a Delusion from Satan, asketh, *Who is the King of Glory?* Answer, *It is the Lord of Hosts, mighty in Battle, he is the King of Glory.* The trembling Soul saith, "I have at sundry Times entertained some Hopes, that it was the King of Glory who knocked at the Door of my disconsolate Heart, and gave me some Manifestations of his Love; but his Visits were transient, and afterwards the Enemy coming in like a Flood, hath opened to my View both sensual and diabolical Inclinations, which always keep me in Fear and Doubt lest my treacherous Heart should be lock'd up by Satan, in the damning Sin of Unbelief," *Mark* xvi. 16. The King replies, "Have Faith in God, for without me ye can do Nothing. And believe my Words, for I have loved thee with an everlasting Love, therefore with Loving-kindness have I (so often) drawn thee unto me," *Jer.* xxxi. 3. The Soul saith, "Oh! that I knew I should never lose thy Love." Then saith the King, "He that believeth in me, and trusteth his Soul to my Keeping, shall have eternal Life, and shall never perish, neither shall any pluck him out of my

S

my

my Hand," *John* x. 28. And then inspires the Soul with divine Joy, which is unspeakable and full of Glory, *1 Peter* i. 8. Thus Love opens the everlasting Doors of the Soul, and then the King of Glory rides in triumphantly, and takes Possession of the penitent Heart of his Bride, *Psal.* xxiv. 7, 8, 10. The Victory being gained, and the strong Man armed cast out; now the wild Olive Tree (whereon hanged all her Hopes through legal Duties) must be taken up by the Roots, out of the Garden of Nature, and Christ the Tree of Life, *Rev.* xxii. 2. implanted in its Room, which bears the Fruits of the Spirit, viz. Love, Joy, Peace, &c. *Gal.* v. 22. 'till the Bride is ravished with his royal and divine Presence, and her Cup like holy David's runs over, *Psal.* xxiii. 5. She being abashed through a Sense of her Unworthiness and past Incredulity, begs her gracious Donor to stop his liberal Hand, being astonished with Admiration at such rapturous Joy! Henceforth she receives her glorious Redeemer, not only as her Husband, but also as a Prophet to teach, a King to subdue, and a Priest to atone. For he is become her "Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption," *1 Cor.* i. 30. And she can call Christ her Lord, by the Holy Ghost, *1 Cor.* xii. 3. (Which none can do by Nature.) And now she loves the Lord her God with all her Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength. And Jesus saith, "If a Man love me, he will keep my Words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our Abode with him," *John* xiv. 23. No Doubt to erect a Throne of Grace in such Hearts where our Saviour saith that the Kingdom of Heaven is within them, *Luke* xvii. 21. And as the Angel in the Kingdom of Glory shewed Saint *John* the Divine, "A pure River of Water of Life, clear as Crystal,

Crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God and the Lamb. In the Midst of the Street of it, and of either Side of the River, was there the Tree of Life, which bare twelve Manner of Fruit," *Rev.* xxii. 1, 2. Doubtless this hath an Allusion to the Kingdom of Grace, for in a similar Manner the Angel of the Covenant sheweth his Church the pure River of Life, God's everlasting Love to his Saints, in the Covenant of Grace, flowing from Eternity to Eternity, proceeding from the Throne of God and the Lamb, which is erected in every Believer's Heart, where the Kingdom of Heaven is said to be, and where Mercy and Truth are met together; Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other, *Psal.* lxxxv. 10. And here God is said to be just, and the Justifier of him, that believeth in Jesus, *Rom.* iii. 26. For Christ being slain, and redeemed us to God by his Blood, *Rev.* v. 9. and opened the cleansing Fountain, *Zech.* xiii. 1. Therefore the River of God's Love, which is a River of Life, being purchased by Christ, has a just Right to run from the Throne of God and the Lamb, for the Benefit of the Church, as clear as Crystal to the Ideas of the Saints (not sullied by Sin) who are invited to drink of the Water of Life freely, *Rev.* xxii. 27. Moreover in the Midst of the Street, in the Path of Life where Pilgrims walk, and in each Side of the River of God's Love is Christ the Tree of Life, planted in the Believer's Heart, bearing all the Fruits of Grace here (which is Glory in the Bud) and when he passeth over the River *Jordan*, he shall partake of the ripe Fruits of the Tree of Life in Glory. And although those Evidences are not so clearly revealed to all God's *Israel*, yet all are exhorted to strive for it, by adding to their Faith Virtue, and to Virtue Knowledge, with Godliness, Brotherly-kindness,

and Charity, or unfeigned Love to God and Man, 2 *Peter* i. 6, 7. "Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perseverance," *Eph.* vi. 18. But why God hath chosen some in Christ before the Foundation of the World, *Eph.* i. 4. and not others? We know not, but as we observed already, God can do what he will with his own: and Scripture informs us, that he "predestinated some unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good Pleasure of his Will; to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace, wherein he hath made them accepted in the Beloved," *Eph.* i. 5, 6. "That the Purpose of God's Election might stand, not of Works, but of him that calleth," *Rom.* ix. 11. Therefore "those Things which are revealed, and left upon Record for our Instruction, belong to us, and to our Children, but secret Things belong to God," *Deut.* xxix. 29. Forasmuch then as the Holy Ghost reveals the Mind of God unto his People, through the Scriptures, whereby Saints shall judge the World, as Witnesses for the Truth, 1 *Cor.* vi. 2. Therefore in whatsoever Company they be, they are no less than the King's Spies; and do inspect into the ill Conduct, and rebellious Practices of his Enemies. And they have Dove's Eyes, quick to discern Truth from Error, *Cant.* i. 15. And wheresoever they discover any disorderly Persons, walking contrary to his Laws, they immediately make Report to their King, by sighing and grieving for their Impiety. And he that searcheth the Heart, knoweth the Mind of his own Spirit in his People, *Rom.* viii. 27. And as he said once, *Who toucheth my Clothes?* knowing Virtue was gone out of him, when the Woman who had an Issue of Blood, touched the Hem of his Garment by Faith, and was healed from her Plague, *Mark* v. 27, 29, 30. So

So now he feels the Sorrow and Grief his own Spirit bears in his People, and how they fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Christ in their Flesh, *Col. i. 24.* As did also just *Lot*, who was vexed with the filthy Conversation of the Wicked, who grieved his righteous Soul from Day to Day with their unlawful Deeds, *2 Peter ii. 7, 8, 9.* And when his Saints are grieved, God is angry with those who are the Cause of it, "For whosoever toucheth them, toucheth the Apple of his Eye," *Zech. ii. 8.* And as the Wicked grieve the Righteous from Day to Day; so "God is angry with the Wicked every Day," *Psal. vii. 11.* And therefore is resolved what to do, *viz.* In the Day of Recompence, God's Eyes being over the Righteous to do them Good, *1 Peter iii. 12.* He orders his Angels to set a Mark on the Foreheads of the Men that sigh, and grieve for the Ungodliness of the Wicked: and then destroy the Impenitent without Pity; but not to come near any one on whom is the Mark, *Ezek. ix. 4, 5, 6.* To the same Purpose it is said, "Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no Harm, *1 Cor. xvi. 22.* And again God saith, "Hurt not the Earth, nor the Sea, 'till the Servants of God are sealed with a (distinguishing) Mark in their Foreheads," *Rev. vii. 3.* So God took particular Care of *Lot* in *Sodom*; for "while he lingered, the Angels laid hold upon his Hand, and brought him without the City: and said, Escape for thy Life; for I cannot destroy *Sodom* 'till thou art got safe to *Zoar*. But as soon as *Lot* had arrived thither, then the Lord rained upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* Brimstone and Fire out of Heaven, 'till they were destroyed," *Gen. xix. 16, 17, 22, 23, 24.* Thus the Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly; and to reserve the Wicked unto the Day of Judgment to be punished, *2 Peter ii. 9.* Unconverted

verted Men little think how God and good Men notice them; and how they expose themselves in the Presence of the Just who live by Faith, *Heb. ii. 4.* And what a Disgrace it will be to them to be wilfully ignorant of Salvation. True it is that "some have not the Knowledge of God," but this is their Shame, *1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.* And every Unbeliever is more or less ashamed of the Gospel, having no Interest therein (except his Death Warrant. So very great is the Fall of Man from God! that the Apostle justly observes where he asketh, "What Communion hath Light with Darknes? and what Concord hath Christ with Belial?" and what Part hath a Believer with unconverted Men? *2 Cor. vi. 14, 15.* Nay they abominate each other, *Prov. xxix. 27.* Yet, notwithstanding, all Men are dead to God, for in *Adam* all died, and so remain 'till Christ makes them alive by a new Birth, *1 Cor. xv. 22.* And Jesus tells us that "except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. What then? he shall die in his Sins, and be reprobated from Christ for ever! "For if any Man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," *Rom. viii. 9.* Yet Men by Nature are so expert in all worldly Affairs, yea, notwithstanding spiritual Ignorance, that in their Generation they are wiser than the Children of Light, *Luke xvi. 8.* Proud Man will not believe that his Eyes are blind, and his Ears deaf, before God calls him by his Grace, *Isa. xliii. 8.* And therefore, either openly or tacitly asketh, "Who are the Wicked whom God will punish if they die without Repentance? and who are they of whom it is said, that where Christ is, they cannot come? *John viii. 21.* The Scriptures answer, All who delight in the Works of the Flesh, Adultery, Fornication, Uncleaness, Laciviousness, Covetousness, which is Idolatry,

Witch-

Witchcraft, Hatred, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings, and such like, which doubtless includes and condemns all unlawful Gaming, Masquerades, Dancing, Play-houses, Horse-racing, Cock-fighting, Bull-baiting, Cudgel-playing, Sabbath-breaking, Card-playing, or any other sinful Diversions, which tend to dishonour God's Word, and bring no Glory unto his holy Name. The Apostle says, "that they which do such Things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, *Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.* For they are Traitors to true Religion, and Despisers of those that are good; heady, high-minded, Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God. Having a Form of Godliness, but denying the Power thereof; from such heathenish Christians, God's true believing Church should turn away, *2 Tim. iii. 3, 4, 5.* For God will rank them at last (if they die in such Sins) among the Fearful and Unbelieving, Liars and Slanderers, Backbiters, and Whisperers, who sow Dissentions among Friends; nay, with Thieves and Robbers, who rob their Neighbours of Goods, or good Name. All such shall have their Portion in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone which is the second Death, *Rev. xxi. 8.* "For God will bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing, whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil," *Eccle. xii. 14.* And there are many (the more the Pity) in this polite Age, who frequent the Lord's Table one Day, and Play-houses, Balls, Card-tables, and other sinful Diversions the next Day; and think it no Harm, but go on during Life, for want of receiving the Love of the Truth as it is in Jesus, which only can make them free from the Slavery of Sin and the Devil, *John viii. 32.* Although such People promise themselves Liberty, they are the Servants of Corruption; for of whom

whom a Man is overcome, of the same is he brought into Bondage, 2 *Peter* ii. 19. There are others who have orthodox Heads, but unsound Hearts (who can privily slander their Neighbours) which God will cut off from his Church, *Psal.* ci. 5. For although they dream of a finished Salvation by Jesus Christ, yet if they hold this Truth in Unrighteousness, *Rom.* i. 18. and can smite their Neighbours secretly, the Lord pronounceth them accursed, *Deut.* xxvii. 24. He therefore that indulges any known Sin, may justly fear that he never was a true Believer; for Christ is not the Minister of Sin, *Gal.* ii. 17. And the Holy Ghost saith, "All Men shall worship the Beast," viz. the Pride of Man, popish Superstition, and the Poms and Vanities of this World; whose Names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the Foundation of the World, *Rev.* xiii. 8. Therefore I fear all those Beast-worshippers, who are pure in their own Eyes, and never came to Christ to be cleansed from their Filthiness, *Prov.* xxx. 12. but continue to love the Pleasures of this World, will be of that unhappy Number spoken of by our Lord, when he saith, that "many shall come (when it is too late, the Door of Mercy being shut) saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us, for we have eaten and drank in thy Presence (we have often receiyed the Sacrament) and thou hast taught in our Streets (we have been frequently at Church) *Luke* xiii. 25, 26. But Christ will say unto them, I never knew you (*i. e.* in a conjugal Relation as my Bride, therefore depart from me, ye that work Iniquity," *Matt.* vii. 22, 23. Forasmuch then as all true believing Christians know the Terrors of the Lord, having felt deep Conviction for Sin, and thus heard the Thunders of *Sinai*, they persuade Men to flee from the Wrath to come, 2 *Cor.*

v. 11. And seek to know Christ and the Power of his Resurrection in their Hearts, *Phil.* iii. 10. whom to know is Life eternal, *John* xvii. 3. Lest they fall from one Wickedness to another, and never come by Faith into God's Righteousness, *Psal.* lxix. 27.

And thus in this tedious Epistle, I have endeavoured to declare, as far as it is revealed, the whole Counsel of God, *Act.* xx. 27. Agreeable to the Command in Scripture which saith, "As every one hath received the Gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God," *1 Peter* iv. 10. Neither am I "ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the Power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth;" (so as to become obedient to Christ) throughout the whole World: and justified Souls do gladly obey, by Virtue of the Principle of Grace implanted in them, *Rom.* i. 16, 17. And they are free from a slavish Fear, which causeth Pain, in the Presence of God or Man; for "being justified by Faith, they have Peace with God, through the Merits and Intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ," *Rom.* v. 1. And forasmuch as the Lord is on their Side, they need not fear what Man can do unto them, *Psal.* cxviii. 6. And therefore the Righteous are bold as a Lion, *Prov.* xxviii. 1. Being adorned with Grace, and arrayed with the Armour of God, they become "fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun, and terrible (to the Enemy) as an Army with Banners," *Cant.* vi. 10. They are compared to a beautiful Woman, clothed with the Sun (*viz.* the Righteousness of God) having the Moon (the Emblem of a changeable World) under her Feet; and upon her Head a Crown of twelve Stars; the Doctrine of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, *Rev.* xii. 1. the Saints' Coat of Arms, or Ensign of

T
Majesty,

Majesty, dwelling in the Court of *Sion*. And they "are kept by the Power of God, through Faith, unto Salvation," 1 *Peter* i. 5. And thus being "faithful unto Death, they shall receive a Crown of Life," *Rev.* ii. 10.

May you who read or hear these mysterious Truths, consider what they contain: and may the Spirit of our Lord reveal the Mystery to your Hearts, for *great is the Mystery of Godliness*, 1 *Tim.* iii. 16.

Behold! I leave this Epistle, as a Legacy, unto you, my very dear and well-beloved Neighbours, the Inhabitants of *Gillingham*, my native Town: being still desirous of your eternal Happiness. And I think it both my Duty and Privilege, to imitate my dear Redeemer, who pray'd for the Salvation of his Enemies and Persecutors: and hath graciously bestowed a Measure of his Love to his Chosen, to enable them to do likewise; in whose Hearts he chooses to reside: for he saith, "This is my Resting-place, here will I ever dwell, for it is my Delight," *Psal.* cxxxii. 14. And as he prayed for his Murderers, saying, *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do*, *Luke* xxiii. 34. And when he commanded his Gospel to be preached in all the World, he directed it should begin at *Jerusalem*, that Salvation might be offered first to his Enemies, *John* xxiv. 47. So, although I am willing, if God permits, this Epistle to go into the World, for the Benefit of all, yet it was written particularly for your Sake. To you therefore I present it, though you were my implacable Enemies and Persecutors, because I believed and confessed that Christ does now, on Earth, forgive Men's Sins, and make it manifest unto them.— This was all my Crime, and this was enough to cause a Dissention or Separation to take Place, and the Declaration of God to appear "I will put En-

mity

mity between thy Seed (the Serpent) and her Seed (the Woman) and altho' Christ bruises the Serpent's Head, (overcame the Powers of Hell) and weakens his controul in the Believer's Heart; yet shall he have Power to bruise his Heel, to vex his People on Earth, by the unregenerate World, *Gen. iii. 15.* for as soon as the Dragon is cast out of the Heart, he like *Goliath* leads his *Philistine* Army to fight against God's *Israel*, *1 Sam. xvii. 10.* Thus the Dragon being wroth with the Woman (or Church of God) always makes War with the Remnant of her Seed (in all Places) which keep the Commandments of God, and have the Testimony of Jesus Christ in them, *Rev. xii. 17.* And as in *Abraham's* Days, he that was born after the Flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit; even so it is now, *Gal. iv. 29.* May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ forgive you, who thro' Ignorance persecuted Christ in his Members, for you knew not what you did. May the Voice of the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, roar like Thunder in your Hearts, and strike the Man of Sin to the Ground, like the Voice from Heaven, which said, *Saul, Saul! why persecutest thou me?* May you tremble at his Word, and in Astonishment cry out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* May he then send a faithful Disciple, like *Ananias*, saying, *Brother Saul, receive thy Sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost,* *Act. ix. 4, 6, 17.* May he then embrace you within the Arms of his Mercy, as he did the returning Prodigal, when he came to himself. May Jesus Christ, who is the faithful and true Witness in every Believer's Heart, wash you from your Sins in his own precious Blood, *Rev. i. 5.* May he guide you while on Earth with his Counsel, and at last receive you to Glory. AMEN.

A Copy of a Letter to the Rev. Mr. PERN, Vicar of Gillingham : occasioned by a Sermon preached March 15th, 1752. on the following Text, *And be ready always to give an Answer to every Man that asketh you a Reason of the Hope that is in you,* 1 Peter iii. 15. In which Discourse he railed vehemently against the Methodists, calling them Blasphemers, Subverters of Houses, Schismatics, also that they wanted to overturn the Constitution of the Kingdom.

REV. SIR,

WITH Submission to that sacred Function, with which you are invested, I intreat you to suspend your Invections with Respect to those People you call Methodists, for if the Work they carry on be of themselves, it will come to Nought, but if of GOD, you cannot overthrow it. And be it known unto you, Rev. Sir, that it is no Blasphemy for the adopted Sons of GOD to call Him their FATHER. Such are many of those whom the unbelieving World call Methodists. Neither is it subverting of Houses, nor Schism for Christian People to meet together after Divine Services, and spend the Remainder of their Sabbath in teaching and admonishing each other in Psalms, &c. As every one hath received the Gift, so minister the same to each other, as good Stewards of the Grace of GOD. The Apostle commanded us not to forget the assembling of ourselves together. GOD saith, where ever two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will grant their Request. All the whole Sabbath we are to delight ourselves in the LORD, not speaking our own Words. It is not our Father's Design to batter down our holy Constitution, neither in Church nor State, by blowing thro' those Ram's-Horns, but to blow down the Walls of Jericho, and to acquaint our dead Members not to be contented with the Form of Godliness, without the Power also : for if we have not the Spirit of CHRIST, we are none of his. It is much to be lamented, by those who have spiritual Eyes, and can see that we have so many blind Watchmen, blind Leaders of the Blind, Isa. lvi. 10. who ran, says GOD, but I never sent them, Jer. xxxiii. 21. who rather marry our Church Members to Duties, than to CHRIST. I could wish the Sons of our Church had fixed their House on the Rock, i. e. had washed their Robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb, they would soon be able to give an Answer of the Hope that would be in them. Which is the sincere Prayer of,

Rev. Sir, with all due Respect, Your humble Servant,
Gillingham, Mar. 15, 1752. JOHN CAVE.

